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Powerless and plagued : C. Wright Mills and Albert Camus in the intellectual history of SDS

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the Intellectual

History of SDS

January 2001

Powerless and Plagued

**C. Wright Mills and Albert Camus
In the Intellectual History of SDS**

by

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A Thesis

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9/15/00

Date

Thesis Advisor

Chairperson of Department

For my friend and mentor John Pettegrew, to whom I am indebted.

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In 1960 a storm was brewing in America. Really, it had been brewing for some time, yet, despite the fact that it could be sensed everywhere, it went undiscussed and unexpressed. Especially among the young, this storm was the cause of a deep anxiety; or, perhaps, this widespread anxiety was the storm itself. Everywhere there was tension and urgency and uncertainty, and covering all this, a glaze of contentment that seemed ridiculously transparent to those who felt these intense currents. But the glaze remained.

And then, like a tornado, on February 1, 1960, four black college students performed the first sit-in in an attempt to make their paper civil rights real. The whirlwind that surrounded these students wreaked havoc on the southern code of repression, and attracted a national spotlight. Instead of dissipating quickly, as tornadoes usually do, this twister seemed to multiply itself. The storm had begun to rage, and these tornadoes were only its first manifestation. When it finally ended, more than a decade later, its path of destruction was immeasurable. America was forever changed.

Called SNCC, SLATE, VOICE, and CORE, these new tornadoes sprang from a seemingly inexhaustible well of anxiety and confusion. These organizations, grass roots in origin and directed at specific injustices, were the earliest outlets for students to express their overwhelming concerns. But these organizations appealed only to a minority of students; for many others, although no less alienated, these groups were simply not the outlets they needed.

On the campus of the University of Michigan there was one such organization. But, this one was different. Though small at first, its few dozen members were handpicked by the organizations "father," a young intellectual named Al Haber. To Haber, these organizations were missing something. So, in 1960, after becoming the

president of the student branch of the League of Industrial Democracy (SLID), Haber decided to create a new organization out of SLID's old left skeleton. With a unique vision, one of radical democracy and intellectual action, for a new decade of urgency, he created Students for a Democratic Society.

Concurrently, a journalism major and editor-in-chief of the prestigious *Michigan Daily*, began writing articles of a rare quality and vision for a man so young. He was on the left, but the New Left—interested in Camus, Dewey, and Mills rather than Marx or Lenin. This young man applauded the new spirit of activism he saw growing on campuses across America. Yet, he also saw the reluctance of the majority of students, stifled in their own webs of confusion, to enter into this new spirit. So, building on the foundation of political philosophy that began to captivate him in his last year at Michigan, and continuing the style of emotional evocation that had come to characterize his work at *The Daily*, he began to analyze the events and feelings that had thus far confounded his generation. Despite the rather scattered pattern of this young man's intellectual focus, Haber instantly recognized this man's potential, and began to recruit him into SDS. His name was Tom Hayden.

But, Tom Hayden was not overwhelmed by a desire to become an official member of SDS. Plagued by how such a large portion of his generation could remain mired in apathy while a minority came to vehemently reject the conditions of society, he was far more interested in direct confrontational action than the nascent SDS's attempts to forge a permanent leftist political organization. And, his writings from this early period reflect this concern—polemical in content and tone, they are more an attempt to stir the still inert members of his generation to action, than any probing intellectual

analyses. In the end, though, Hayden could not resist the radical intellectuality or the faith in democracy exhibited by Haber and SDS. SDS would go on to use Hayden's language, stirring as it seized upon what the young middle-class was feeling but unable to express themselves, as their intellectual voice.

Ideologies once made men feel apart of a cosmic or historical design: but lonely individual responsibility is at the core of student protest today...

I am beset by doubt...so, perhaps are we all. We doubt our ability to effect change, we doubt our ability to understand enough, we doubt the validity of time-honored liberal notions, we doubt the right and wrong of it. I do not recommend that we banish doubt and rush forth under the banal slogan "where there is a will there is a way," but I would suggest that it is possible and necessary to begin to think and act—provisionally yet strongly—in the midst of our doubts.

The search for truly democratic alternatives to the present, and a commitment to social experimentation with them, is a worthy and fulfilling human enterprise, one which moves us and, we hope, others today.¹

And, with passages like these, passages indicative of how he characterized the conflicted consciousness of America's youth in the early 60's, Hayden would go on to make SDS the center of the New Left.

In addition, Hayden possessed a unique ability to make sharp analytical commentary of a leftist or radical nature, and still appeal to the average student who had little or no knowledge of radical ideas. And, it was Hayden's talent for oppositionalism—his critiques of the condition of life at the universities, of the programmatic life that lay before his generation, of the apathy of the students, of the bankruptcy of American liberalism, and of the Cold War and its subsequent ideology that terrorized America and rationalized its deficiencies—that caught the attention of Al Haber and thousands of others.² Although by many accounts Americans were experiencing the peak of post-war prosperity and contentment in 1960, when Tom

Hayden looked out on to his society, he saw crisis beneath the material affluence, and alienation and rebellion lurking behind the contentedness and consensus. But, the articles and speeches Hayden, Haber, and other SDSers were producing for *The Daily*, SDS, and other magazines and organizations, in 1960 and '61 were only the initial steps in the process of their intellectual development.

On June 12th 1962, when fifty-nine of these students emerged from a haze of exhaustion and euphoria and drifted to the edge of Lake Huron to bask in the glow of what they had just experienced, their development had reached a culmination. A week of sleepless nights, deep-felt comradeship, and empowering discussion had ended, and something new began. None of them were sure what they had done, but they all knew that they had done something. The process did not create the "New Left" or mark the origins of student activism. Yet, unlike anything that came before it, the document drafted by Students for a Democratic society changed the very nature of the "New Left" and sent ripples of strife throughout America. In 1962 America was on the precipice of a mass youth revolution; Students for a Democratic Society and its *Port Huron Statement* would push it over the edge. What follows is the history of the process of intellectual development that became *The Port Huron Statement*.

In 1960, SDS was one of a dozen organizations that comprised the "New Left"—the term used to describe the massive and amorphous movement of people, mostly young, against the status quo ideas and norms of American society in the 1960's. The New Left consisted of a core of organizations—for example, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the Free Speech Movement (FSM), and SLATE (a student political party at the University of

Michigan)—supported by a layer of people who agreed with the principles of the New Left, but did not belong to any particular organization. While these organizations formed, for the most part, in the early 1960's, this layer (usually called the “student movement”) did not become a force in the New Left until 1965.³

The “New Left,” differentiated from the old left of the 1930's by its left liberal or radically democratic political orientation, took as its prophets, not Marx or Lenin, but thinkers as divergent as the pragmatist democrat John Dewey, the radical sociologist C. Wright Mills, the existential humanist Albert Camus, and the voice of the “beat” generation, Jack Kerouac. As eclectic as its intellectual roots were, the New Left's focus was singular and clear: opposing “the moral vomit of society.” In his book A Prophetic Minority (1966), Jack Newfield divides the mentality of the New Left itself into three distinct levels: at its base, the movement was an existential rebellion against the absurdity of life in America; secondly, it was an ethical revulsion to the increasing corruption and immorality of society; and finally, on its surface, the New Left was a political revolt against the injustices and inequities of the American System.⁴ The New Left's collective mission was to change the ethical character of American society, a character felt to be beyond simple repair and in need of radical reevaluation and revision.

The distinctiveness of SDS grew from its ability to integrate the existential, moral, and political in such a way as to create a vision and a system of values that transcended the New Left's focus on these immediate and apparent levels of anxiety. And, it was the conjoining of the two thinkers dominated their intellectual evolution—Albert Camus and C. Wright Mills—that provided the framework for the linking of these levels of reaction. Although the ideas of these two men are by no means contradictory, together they

embody a certain tension as to the means by which change should be effected. Camus, the French existentialist humanist, advocated direct individual moral action against the ills of society; Mills, on the other hand, a radical pragmatist sociologist, believed that society needed intellectual understanding and political leadership to confront society's structural inadequacies. This tension between direct action and intellectual leadership guided SDS's early intellectual development and directed the programs they implemented. *The Port Huron Statement*, in this light, was the final stage in the process of integrating these two lines of thought.

Though certainly part of the New Left, SDS's intellectual focus, their historical consciousness, and their conception of the role they wanted to play in American society self-consciously held them apart from the bulk of New Left organizations. SDS believed the events of 1960 had made it a watershed year in American history, and that the ideas and intellectuals who had come before them were somehow lacking for not having witnessed, as they had, these events. Colored by this conception, they painstakingly differentiated themselves from the old Left of the 1930's those radicals who came before them. Yet, as Jack Diggins points out in his *The Rise and Fall of the American Left* (1973), this very idea places them firmly within the tradition of the American Left in the twentieth century. Each of the major uprisings of this American Leftist tradition—the “lyrical” left of Randolph Bourne, Max Eastman, and a young Walter Lippman, the old anti-communist Left of Michael Harrington and Norman Thomas, the New Left—tried to make themselves out to be unique contemporary interpreters of a distinctly American line of thought running from Jefferson and Paine to Thoreau and Whitman. SDS plays only a minor role in Diggins treatment of the New Left, so he misses the fact that, ironically,

SDS was *the* New Left organization with the deepest understanding of and place in this tradition and the one that tried hardest to contextualize itself apart from it.

SDS's statement of values, the centerpiece of *The Port Huron Statement*, illustrates the full breadth of SDS's intellectual influences, drawing from John Dewey, John Stuart Mills, C. Wright Mills, Pope John XXIII, Arnold Kaufman, Albert Camus, and others. Intended to serve as the philosophical foundation of the movement *and* of the world they wanted to create, the values represent the renewal of the optimistic hopes and the faith of the Enlightenment in the face of overwhelming nihilism and despair. Lastly, they exclaim the totality of SDS's rejection of the vision of man and society as corrupt and inept, incapable of living amongst one another without competition, exploitation and violence, and undeserving or unable to participate in the political decisions that effect his life. This concept of man and society, one of pessimism and despair and so pervasive at the time, was at the heart of the plague the New Left set out to destroy.

But, this story begins in 1961, when Hayden began to move away from being one of many "bodies on the line" for SNCC, and toward being the intellectual voice of SDS, "galvanizing students nationally to confront the system and change it."⁵ This second period, roughly from late-1961 to the Port Huron Conference in June of 1962, saw the formation of SDS unique intellectual composition. Strategically, SDS moved closer to a radical Pragmatism, accepting the provisional nature of their analyses yet choosing to act on them nonetheless. The direction and impetus of this strategic paradigm became clear in this period, as SDS integrated Camus and Mills into their ideological framework. Understanding the formation of this ideological framework is crucial to understanding what *The Port Huron Statement* meant to SDS, both personally and politically.

Vision, Inspiration, and Purpose

From January to June of 1962, Tom Hayden went on an intellectual journey, through the ideas of some of history's greatest thinkers, to create an understanding that, filtered through the experiences of the movement, made sense of America in the 1960's. Built on the course work of his senior year at Michigan—rich with political science, philosophy, and literature, and channeled through his writings for *The Daily* and SDS—Hayden's radicalism, and his role as a radical intellectual, really came to fruition in late 1961 and early 1962. He began to see, as Haber and the other early SDSers had seen since 1960, the interconnectedness of the symptoms his generation was exhibiting. Furthermore, he began to link these symptoms to the fact that few prophets existed who might lead the youth revolution, and that, in terms of the condition of values and ideals, America was a virtual wasteland. *The Port Huron Statement*, then, afforded Hayden and SDS the opportunity to provide the New Left with both a foundation, through a statement of values, and direction, through critical intellectual analyses of the condition of modern America.

Very early on in his political and intellectual awareness, Tom Hayden was concerned, almost obsessed with the apparent destitution of the American intellectual community, or, at least with its left-liberal and radical elements. SDS believed that American liberal intellectuals, having bought into the ideas that they were incapable of understanding the complexities of the world, and that ideals have little place in politics, had become dangerously conservative. And this conservatism in liberal intellectuals forced change-oriented students to ask some plaguing questions, questions as to

Whether or not society contains any prophets who can speak in language and concept that is authentic for us, that can make luminous

the inner self that burns for understanding, if only for the understanding that, ultimately there might be no understanding.⁶

The language and concepts of older intellectuals did not make sense of the world the young inhabited. Revealing the pragmatic strain of his burgeoning radicalism, Hayden admits that even if ultimately certain knowledge is no longer be possible, the need for some kind of intellectual certainty remains. Yet, when Hayden posed these questions, in early 1962, he did so rhetorically; by mid-1961 he had already come to terms with the fact that the New Left had no visionary and intellectual leaders. In addition to, or perhaps as a result of, the prophetic inadequacy of liberal intellectuals, Hayden and his generation were "the inheritors and victims of a barren period in the development of values."⁷ To most Americans, all crusades for ideals had become suspect, and all ideologies and social theories were thought to be blinding, obstructionist, and, inevitably, a source of violence.

To SDS and Hayden, the upshot of prophetlessness was clear. In the words of C. Wright Mills,

Every time intellectuals have the chance to speak and do not speak, they join the forces that train men not to be able to think and imagine and feel in morally and politically adequate ways. When they do not think and feel and act as intellectuals—and so as public men—they too contribute to the moral paralysis, the intellectual rigidity that now grips leaders and men around the world.⁸

SDS's preoccupation with the abandonment of the discussion of ideals and values, coupled with their sense of being prophetless, found unique expression with Hayden's pen:

The questions we think existentially important [what is really important? can we live in a different and better way? If we wanted to change society, how would we do it?] receive deferential treatment, if any treatment at all, from the men whose minds and imaginations are respected by society. The asking of serious questions is discouraged, the answering is never attempted. The grade, the seniority, the mental prostitution is the thing. Soon we stop raising the questions, and find it easier to "get by." This is called growing up absurd.⁹

This passage is Tom Hayden at his best: “the questions” are questions of values, and they are not asked; “the men whose minds...are respected by society” are the would-be prophets, and they do not raise the questions; the young have been “growing up absurd,” and it is this that lies at the heart of their anxiety, their apathy, and their rebellion.

The path for SDS was clear: to be the prophets, to ask the questions, to escape the absurd by individual and collective moral action, to reject the condition of American society and erect something new in its place. “The felt truths of this age call us to incorporate new dimensions into our existence. Those demeritions will constitute our response to the challenges of modernity...” Hayden would call these new dimensions “activist,” “intellectual,” and “democratic citizen.” Furthermore, in an essay entitled “Politics, the Individual, and SDS,” Hayden would “assert the necessity for some persons to clarify and fight for the ideal, lest the ideal itself be submerged in the myopic realism of our leadership.”¹⁰ Hayden was always reluctant to lead directly, yet by 1962 two things were clear to him and to SDS—that the movement needed intellectual guidance, and that SDS was the ideal organization to provide it.

“A Letter to the New (Young) Left,” published in the winter of 1961, is the most complete expression of Hayden’s unique strain of radicalism tempered by a near Deweyan pragmatism. The letter, borrowing its title from C. Wright’s Mills “Letter to the New Left” published originally in 1959, begins with a brief summary of the international, domestic, and educational problems confronting the New Left, problems intensified by the apprehension of intellectuals to lead the protest against America’s evils. “So here we stand, limp, questioning, even scared... It is not as though we can dismiss the world... It is not as though we can change it... It is not as though we even know

what to do: We have no real visionaries as leaders... A more blinding situation is difficult to imagine.”¹¹ But Hayden and SDS, taking the intellectual reigns, knew an alternative to standing limp, questioning, and scared—to take action, provisionally, in order to change society, fundamentally.

“The radical style,” as Hayden would call this line of thought, hopeful and optimistic in opposition to the currents of defeating dogmatism coursing through the American intellectual community, “takes as its presupposition Dewey’s claim that we are free to the extent that we know what we are about.” In true pragmatic style, Hayden would expand this to mean that the New Left must come to an understanding of the roots or real causes of America’s social problems, act based on these understandings, and yet remain willing to continually reappraise their social analyses, and adjust their actions accordingly. The appeal of pragmatism, for Hayden, was its ability to blend the passions of the New Left with his own critical talents and those of SDS to create provisional programs for substantive change.¹² As if written with Dewey’s pen, Hayden would go to say that

the things we are for or against are quite simple on the level of abstraction; it is in the test of their practical meaning that we must make our judgement—not between good and evil, but the more difficult distinction between better or best, or the hardest choices of all, that of the necessary evil.¹³

Although SDS rarely expressed these notions with this degree of explicitness, their actions, the adoption of *The Port Huron Statement* as a “living document” subject to change, and their insistence on provisional, open-ended programs to the exclusion long-term ideological dictates or plans, clearly betrays the pragmatic elements of their intellectual heritage.

Part of the difficulty in understanding SDS and Tom Hayden as pragmatists is the degree to which they themselves wedded their pragmatism to radical politics, a marriage usually not associated with pragmatist thinkers.¹⁴ The pragmatic and provisional nature of SDS's character made its radicalism one of spirit much more than one of program.

An essential phase of radicalism is the decision to disengage oneself entirely from the system being confronted... Another essential, however, is that we visualize and then build structures to counter those which we oppose. This extends from the concrete formation of a national student organization to the conception—for the time being—formation of a different society.¹⁵

Hayden, characterizing the New Left as a movement borne out of emotion and based on sentiments, advocated the movement keep its sentiments as its base, and yet “move ahead concertedly with [its] goal—the changing of society, not the assuaging of its ills.” As pragmatists, SDS and Hayden sought a comprehensive even if provisional critical vision of America's social ills. Yet, their radicalism, again emotional and sentimental before mechanical or instrumental, demanded a more sweeping and evocative vision than intellectuality alone could produce—they needed a metaphor for their vision of America.

Hayden found his metaphor in the works of Albert Camus. Set in North Africa in the 1940's, The Plague is Camus' portrait of the events and actions of the people of the city of Oran as they face a pestilence that besieges the city and begins to kill its residents in ever-increasing numbers.¹⁶ To the horror of Dr. Rieux, Camus' hero and the only person to fight the plague, the people of Oran remained mired in apathy even as the plague kills their friends and loved ones. For Hayden,

Camus' hero, a doctor who treated plague victims and organized sanitation teams (while in the process losing his wife and a friend), expressed the philosophy that I was searching for: 'All I maintain is that on this earth there are pestilences and there are victims, and it is up to us, so far as possible, not to join forces with the pestilences.'¹⁷

Hayden began to see that America was infected with a plague, manifesting itself as described in part one, and that both the adult generation and the majority of students continued with business as usual, ignoring its pervasive and threatening evil.

Those students who could see the plague rotting out all that was potentially good about America experienced a “sense of exile and deprivation, with all the cross-currents of revolt and fear... There are times... when the only feeling I have is one of mad revolt.”¹⁸ Instead of mad revolt, however, Camus called for and inspired genuine rebellion, rebellion as the confrontation, in the face of the absurdity or meaninglessness of life, with injustice and the evil of the plague. Such genuine rebellion, in itself, “asserted a human nature worth preserving from extermination and drew the individual from solitude to solidarity: ‘I rebel—therefore we exist.’”¹⁹ The life affirming nature of genuine rebellion, rebellion for the sake of rebellion without knowledge of pragmatic ends, imbued its proponents with a great deal of confidence that the individual mattered and that nothing was pre-determined, and illustrated to the rebel that action creates an evidence of its own.

Hayden equated the student activism of the early 1960's, and especially the actions of SNCC (who were deeply influenced by Camus and, in fact, were largely responsible for turning Hayden on to him), with those of Dr. Rieux—rebellion against evil and injustice without certainty as to the ends. Like Sisyphus, another of Camus' heroes, who was forced, for eternity, to push a boulder up a hill only to watch it roll down the other side, the student activists could (and did) find resolution to uncertainty by committing themselves to moral struggle. The search for meaning through rebellion for the sake of rebellion engrossed Hayden for a time, but eventually he was confronted with

its limits—he wanted to actually change society, not just struggle to do so. And so, inspired by Camus and committed to destroying America's plague, Hayden set his sights on the one intellectual who was able to provide a social analysis that made sense to SDS—C. Wright Mills.

Hayden's interest in the work and person of C. Wright Mills began when he was turned on to him by the members of SDS. Yet, in Hayden's thinking, the critical intellectuality advocated by Mills did not gain ascendancy over the commitment to direct struggle advocated by Camus until Hayden returned from the south in late 1961. Hayden never lost the vision and inspiration Camus gave him; during the crucial months of research prior to writing the manifesto, however, it was Mills' ideas and concepts that became of central importance to Hayden. "We require a social analysis which is both detailed and frank in its moral orientation."²⁰ And, although SDS and Hayden rejected Mills' pervasive pessimism, his description and analysis of the condition of America, in addition to his conception of democracy and his vision of the role of the intellectual in leading the charge against these conditions, became much of the backbone of the ideology SDS had set out to create.

The problems in understanding the thought of C. Wright Mills, both unto itself and in how it effected SDS, stem from Mills' enigmatic relationship with his intellectual heritage, and the sheer volume of his work. As a graduate student in sociology at the University of Wisconsin, Mills intensively studied the American pragmatist tradition and especially the ideas of John Dewey. And though he would later divorce himself from Dewey's philosophy, thinking him too conservative and acquiescent to America's status

quo liberals, Dewey's ideas on democracy, would pervasively color Mills work for his entire life.

During his short career, Mills wrote ten sociology monographs and dozens of critical articles. As a result, his mature and complete vision of society, and his suggestions on how America's problems could be overcome, can be seen only through an understanding of the totality of Mills' work. Although SDS consumed the majority of Mills' work, the core of what they borrowed from him came from his trilogy of critical sociological studies, The New Men of Power: America's Labor Leaders (1948), White Collar (1951), and The Power Elite (1956). These three important works in American scholarship comprise the opus of Mills' academic career, and understanding the analytical vision of America Mills creates in them is vital to understanding SDS and the meaning of the *PHS*.

Of primary importance in understanding Mills' analysis of the society he saw emerging in America in the 20th century, the society that SDS vowed to reject and change, is the concept of democracy on which Mills founded his critique—a concept taken, almost verbatim, from John Dewey. Fundamentally, a democratic society, for both Mills and Dewey, is one in which, as Mills says, “everyone vitally affected by social decisions, regardless of its sphere, would have a voice in that decision, and a hand in its administration.”²¹ Structurally, this conception of democracy would manifest itself as a society of “publics,” groups of self-educating, self-cultivating, rational, and free individuals in which “discussion is the ascendant means of communication and the mass media, if they exist, simply enlarge and animate the discussion linking one face to face public with another.”²² The effectiveness of this structure of publics comes from each

individuals willingness to translate their personal problems and anxieties into issues concerning the structure of society, and to link those politicized problems, via public discussion, to the problems of their fellow citizens. In essence, with each individual turning the personal into the political and jealously guarding the individual rights afforded them by the political structure, each “public” is given collective direction, and thus the power to effect change locally and direct the actions of their elected national officials.

For Mills, quite apart from Dewey, who believed democratic “publics” to be emerging and not disappearing, the Twentieth century was witnessing the destruction of “publics” and the growth of “masses.” Irving Louis Horowitz, one of the foremost Mills scholars, lucidly captures the essence of Mills' conception of this phenomenon in C.

Wright Mills: An American Utopian (1983):

With the growing complexity and specialization of the society, all issues before the public acquire a complex character. Public response and participation are hampered or made impossible as consequence; hence full exercise of social responsibility in national or community matters is seriously obstructed. But if individuals do not actively shape their own environment, how can they take pride in it, be informed about it, defend it?... The surrender of the public sphere, the collapse of the political side of life and an active relation to it, is for Mills the outcome of the professionalization of politics, resulting from the concentration and centralization of property and organization.²³

The emerging middle-class, for Mills, was fast becoming a mass of “cheerful robots”—materially satisfied yet, without a public forum, powerless to effect the decisions that direct their lives and isolated in their personal “milieus.” “The issues that now shape man’s fate are neither raised or decided by any public at large” because “the dominant type of communication is the formal media and publics [have] become mere markets for [this] media.”²⁴ Where as the core of the “public” was the individual’s willingness to

make the personal political, people in a mass society suffer from the inability to connect their individual anxieties to the political and social structures actually causing these seemingly isolated concerns.²⁵

The implications of this trend were, for Mills, two fold. The powerlessness and isolation resulting from the disintegration publics begets a deep apathy in the citizen. And secondly, the disappearance of publics makes power irresponsible; the men of power, without interested and educated publics to answer to, could wield their power with impunity, never feeling the consequences of their decisions and therefore able to manipulate the masses reactions via the mass media. Although the transmutation of “publics” into “masses” had been occurring over decades and was the result of political, social, and economic factors, so far as Mills was concerned, the group most responsible for this development was the group of which he was a member—the American intellectual community.

Instead of creating clear and comprehensive analyses, and thus helping the public to understand the changes surrounding them, Mills believed the American intellectual community confronted the increasing complexity of the twentieth with an ideology that made just such endeavors impossible—in Daniel Bell’s phrase, the “end-of-ideology.” Liberals created the “end-of-ideology,” itself an ideology of sorts as Mills defined it, in order to combat and destroy fascist, socialist, or Marxist ideologies that seemed so threatening in the 1940’s and 1950’s. Through this project of dismantling the idea of ideologies, however, the American liberal capitalist ethos became submerged beneath the guise of “reality.” America no longer had an “ideology” or an orienting theory, but simply understood the processes of its historical development as natural or just “the way

things are.” As Mills would say in the “Letter to the New Left, “political bias masquerades as epistemological excellence, and there are no orienting theories.”²⁶

As an ideology (more of a mood, Mills would say), this paradigm called for complacency; it declared, definitively yet subliminally, that the American status quo was the best way to do things, that the world is dangerous, and that, above all, America should be cautious, implement piecemeal reforms, and not move to change things too quickly. This reluctance to create and use ideologies, driven almost to a manic fear, drained facts of any and all ability to enlighten people and shock them into action. For, without ideologies to create comprehensible patterns, facts are little more than empty vesicles of useless information.

This refusal to relate isolated facts and fragmentary comment to the changing institutions of society makes it impossible to understand the structural realities which these facts might reveal or the longer-run trends of which they might be tokens. In brief, fact and idea are isolated, so the real questions are not even raised, analysis of the meanings of facts not even begun.²⁷

The debunking of the idea of ideologies, much less of ideologies themselves, by intellectuals, rendered the public inert in the face of the overwhelming complexity of society and the myriad of information flowing through it. “The end-of-ideology is in reality the ideology of an ending: the ending of political reflection itself as a public fact.”²⁸

As a matter of perception, America’s leadership, both political and intellectual, expressed the sentiment that the U.S. no longer had any major social or political issues to deal with, and, that whatever nagging problems still existed were in the process of amelioration. Again, Mills saw this optimism (and complacency) as a construct of America’s liberal capitalist ideology, and its “end-of- (the need for) ideology”

counterpart—the “absence [of issues] from many discussions is an ideological condition, regulated [*sic*] by whether or not intellectuals detect and state problems as potential *issues* for probable publics, and as *troubles* for a variety of individuals.”²⁹ Based on this conception of the inadequacies of the intellectuals, Mills clearly advocated the reassertion of intellectuality as the means to recreate democratic publics. It was time for the American intellectual community to take responsibility, and begin “to translate personal troubles into public issues, and public issues into the terms of their human meaning for a variety of individuals.”³⁰ Mills was never particularly comfortable with intellectuals posing as the agents of social change; yet, by 1960 and the emergence of the New Left, he began to recognize that few others were willing to play the part.

The importance of C. Wright Mills’ analysis to Hayden and SDS is not difficult to surmise; his ideas and works show up pervasively in the writings of all the early SDS members, as well as throughout the material SDS mimeographed for distribution to the public. Yet, the primary attraction to Mills, especially for Hayden, was his exploration of powerlessness and isolation as the causes of the apathy most of America exhibited in the face of the plague that so moved SDS.³¹ In “Student Social Action,” a speech delivered by Hayden in March 1962 and a virtual first draft of *The Port Huron Statement*, Hayden’s rhetoric regularly mirrors Mills:

As the perimeter of personal vision becomes closer, several terrible things happen. A sense of powerlessness evolves, powerlessness with regard to changing the state of affairs evoked by the ideology of “complexity,” a powerlessness that is often hidden beneath joviality and complacency.³²

In addition to providing SDS with an understanding of the historical processes they were confronting, Mills’ sanctioning of the activist role of the intellectual crystallized SDS’s self-conception. As Hayden wrote in his master’s thesis, *Radical Nomad*, “Mills calls for

a morally enraged and politically responsible intellectual elite to be the new agent for social change.”³³ In essence, Mills provided the clarification and validation SDS sought for the part it had chosen to play.

For SDS, these conceptions of Camus and Mills were complementary, and, once integrated, they provided the foundation for their ideology. Camus’ life work revolved around characterizing the absurdity of human existence, and purporting individual moral action, against the everyday evil each person faced, as the only means to escape this meaninglessness. Much of the New Left understood their anxiety through Camus’ writings, and the protests of the early 1960’s were, for many, the New Left’s response to Camus’ challenge of moral action.

Yet, the influence of C. Wright Mills took this individual moral action a step further. Camus wanted to turn the individual, isolated and plagued by internal existential anxiety, into a moral activist fighting the evil whenever encountered—undisclosed existential anxiety transformed into a primarily individual confrontation. Mills, in juxtaposition, called for the individual to turn personal concerns into political ones, and push these politicized issues into a public forum. SDS (reluctantly for some members) embraced individual moral action as a means to stave off existential anxiety, and sought to transform this *personal* existential concern with immorality and injustice into a political problem demanding *collective* and radical action. This creative interpretation and integration of Camus and Mills, of existentialism and radical pragmatism, really differentiated SDS from all other New Left organizations, and represents their most significant contribution to America’s radical intellectual heritage.

Tom Hayden, in addition to his search for inspiration and vision, set out to clarify the purpose of the project he had been commissioned to create. Though SDS was radical and idealistic, they were not unrealistic as to their ability to effect change or the range of their voice; they had a clear grasp as to what they, as a radical organization, needed to do.

As social existence greatly determines social consciousness, we most affect the real social existence, the life experience, of individuals, with our message. Therefore a complex and extremely difficult organizational program has to be mounted, encompassing many kinds of issues... fluctuating from moderation to radicalism, balancing direct action with scholarly investigation and social criticism, cemented by our concern for democracy which... can be neither romantically abstract nor programmatically concrete, but one that is at once visionary and relevant.³⁴

The Port Huron Statement, ostensibly, was to be the medium of SDS's vision and social criticism; yet its purpose—the form in which it should be written, and how this form was to achieve SDS's overall goal—was a matter of concern for Hayden.

In his first convention document, written in March 1962 and distributed to the members of SDS, Hayden proposed an answer to the question of purpose, borrowing it, in part, from the British philosopher/novelist Iris Murdoch.

The "house of theory" of which Iris Murdoch speaks, is not a private one, not a monastery. In its planning, in its construction and occasional reconstruction, it must be relevant to the public order, else our vision is wastefully or selfishly spent... I am proposing that we stop filching our values by copying what stand is taken by the men we admire. I am proposing that the world is not too complex, our knowledge too limited, our time too short, as to prevent the orderly building of a house of theory, or at least its foundation, right out in public... I am proposing that the inner dialogue of man can be regenerated and so also can the appreciative communication between man and man.³⁵

The Port Huron Statement, and especially its values statement, was to be SDS's "house of theory"—the values around which they would recreate society, and the means by which they would reinvigorate the contemplation of political ideas, both within the individual and between people. For, to try to change the ethical character of society in an

overt and public manner, as SDS and the New Left sought to do, SDS understood the need to make their values both clear and known.

For both Tom Hayden and the members of SDS, from whom he learned and with whom he discussed the multitude of ideas he encountered in his research, *The Port Huron Statement* was a process of intellectual development. As such, the creation of the document itself had significant personal meaning for all those involved. The statement was, as the quote above relates, an affirmation of their own abilities as young intellectuals—their ability to create a system of values where there was none, to construct an ideology in the face of the devaluation of the idea of ideologies, to forge a coherent social criticism despite the complexities of the world.

Not only did SDS join Mills in the call to make the personal political, through *The Port Huron Statement*, they in fact were making the personal political. They turned their sense of prophetlessness into a public document that asked (and attempted to answer) the questions—why do we live as we do?, can we live better way?, how do we do so?—that America's intellectuals never asked. They turned their distress over the valuelessness of society, over the lack of discussion about society's values, into a public statement of their own values. Lastly, they turned their disquietude about the apathy of their peers and the directionlessness of the New Left into a document that might move people out of apathy and give ideological guidance for young activists.

In essence, however, *The Port Huron Statement* was the manifestation of SDS's ideological integration of Camus and Mills. SDS wanted to commit themselves to the struggle against evil through direct moral action; yet, they understood the need, from Mills, to be intellectuals and social critics, and to create a permanent dissident Left. The

PHS was SDS's first attempt to set out their comprehensive intellectual analysis of structure and transgressions of society, and to announce to the world the system of values they embodied and sought to disseminate—in a Millsian fashion. Furthermore, the values statement provided SDS with a foundation from which they could act—not only against evil, as Camus suggests, but to move society in the direction they thought it should go. The creation of *The Port Huron Statement* was SDS as intellectuals; the values they created allowed SDS to be activists.

The creation of *The Port Huron Statement* was a process two years in the making. And though Tom Hayden was the voice and the principle relater of this process, it encompassed all of the early members of SDS. SDS's vision, their inspiration, the purpose they ascribed the document, and the personal meaning it had for them, are implicit in the *PHS*. Yet, these elements of the process are key to understanding SDS and their *Port Huron Statement*. The Port Huron process ended on June 12th 1962, when the SDS convention ratified the statement unanimously. And, on June 13th, a new process began—one of trying to make their values a reality. In a few years, *The Port Huron Statement* would be left by the wayside for SDS, replaced by a more militant and less intellectual manifesto. Yet, for the few years after the Port Huron conference, *The Port Huron Statement* would govern the programs SDS instated, and attract the members SDS added to its roster. *The Port Huron Statement* remains one of the most widely read leftist documents in American history, and to understand its appeal, to understand how it moved and guided SDS, one must understand the statement of values that lie at its heart.

A Statement of Values

SDS had always conceived of themselves as intimately connected to the New Left, yet somehow distinct from it in crucial ways. Certainly, the most important of these was SDS's conception of its manifesto. "While most political groups... might start by describing their goals in a programmatic sense, it was our consensus that if the movement were built around a consciousness of new values, a program and tactics would naturally follow."³⁶ The statement of values, in its eclecticism, is really the paradigmatic intellectual project of SDS—a rich and broad tapestry of ideas drawn from the European Enlightenment tradition, Marxism, existentialism, and the American radical intellectual heritage.

Centered around the idea of a genuine democracy of participation, the values affirm the major concepts, and confront the most commonly cited problems linked to participatory democracy. Given the Pragmatic and activist elements of their intellectual composition, SDS frowned upon abstract theorizing and empty rhetoric. Yet, they were also troubled by the decline of utopianism and the fact that, in the words of *The Port Huron Statement*, "theoretic chaos has replaced the idealistic thinking of old—and, unable to reconstitute theoretic order, men have condemned idealism itself."³⁷ Thus, "We are aware that to avoid platitudes we must analyze the concrete conditions of social order. But to direct such an analysis we must use the guideposts of basic principles. Our social values involve conceptions of Human beings, human relationships, and social systems."³⁸

Before expounding upon its conception of "human nature," SDS first considers the visions they reject. Consciously "countering perhaps the dominant conceptions of

man in the Twentieth century,” SDS refused to accept the idea that humans were either inherently incapable of partaking in the governance of their lives, or apt only to be objects of manipulation by the state.³⁹ “Man is seen as decidedly not rational: he is a package of confusion, irrationality, and anxiety, not competent to consistently, if at all, judge the ‘best course’ ... It is usually added as a reinforcing point that man by nature is selfish, aggressive, or power-lusting, or cursed by original sin, or combinations of these. Or it is insisted that all men really do not desire freedom...”⁴⁰

The origins of these visions of humanity were multitudinous: Freudian psychologists, political-religious thinkers like Rienhold Niebuhr, intellectuals like H. L. Menken and S. H. Lipset, and, as Sheldon Wolin reveals, even America’s Founding Fathers.⁴¹ In essence, the sum of these visions was a broad rationalization of the need for a government of the elite—an elite, as Hayden says, “that will look on the inferior majority with compassion, and necessarily an elite which submits itself to examination via checks-and-balances, rigorous constitutionalism, and periodic elections.”⁴² And, as the “social system” section will elucidate, it was this oligarchical notion of government to which SDS was so vehemently opposed.

“We regard man as infinitely precious and possessed of unfulfilled capacities for reason, freedom, and love”—so begins the SDS’s discussion on human nature. SDS purported a conception of man as having “unrealized potential for self-cultivation, self-direction, self-understanding, and creativity.” As such, the object of both humans and society should be to propagate human independence and the actualization of this unrealized potential. Yet, this independence is not to be egoistic individualism—each

person's goal is "not to have one's own way so much as it is to have a way that is one's own."⁴³

This idea of human nature comes, almost in its totality, from the Enlightenment tradition and those thinkers, including John Stuart Mill, Karl Marx, John Dewey, and the humanist psychologists, who carried these ideas from the Eighteenth to the Twentieth century. If supported by open, educative, and liberating institutions, humans, according to this vision, can realize their unlimited capacities and move toward perfection. The actual words of the *PHS* were originally "infinitely perfectible" and "possessed of unlimited capacities;" yet, under the recommendation of one of its convention members, the SDS convention changed the words to those of Pope John XXIII's *Pacem in Terris*—"infinitely precious" and "unfulfilled capacities."⁴⁴ This substitution, in keeping with SDS's eclectic democratic tendencies, served to explicate their faith in the human potential without purporting human deification.

Furthermore, in the "human nature" section, both Albert Camus and C. Wright Mills crop up in SDS's thinking.

The goal of man and society should be human independence: a concern not with images of popularity but with finding a meaning in life that is personally authentic: a quality of mind not compulsively driven by a sense of powerlessness...⁴⁵

For Camus, individual moral action was the means by which one could achieve a personally authentic life—a life in which the individual might find meaning. And, as discussed in Part Two, Mills was almost obsessed by the felt powerlessness of the individual and the apathy that inevitably grew from this powerlessness. Inherent in SDS's vision, humans, infinitely perfectible and having unfulfilled capacities, demanded

both personal authenticity and power to effect the direction of his life in order to live as a human.

Just as SDS reflected their conception of human nature off of the vision they were rejecting, the discussion of ideal human relationships was juxtaposed with a description of the character of human relationships they sought to replace.

Loneliness, estrangement, isolation describe the vast distance between man and man today. These dominant tendencies cannot be overcome by better personal management, nor by improved gadgets, but only when a love of man overcomes the idolatrous worship of things by man.⁴⁶

The type of human relationships they sought to realize was in reality an extension of their conception of human nature.

Human relationships should involve fraternity and honesty. Human interdependence is a contemporary fact; human brotherhood must be willed however, as a condition of future survival and as the most appropriate form of social relations... As the individualism we affirm is not egoism, the selflessness we affirm is not self elimination.⁴⁷

In essence, SDS was looking to establish a community of human beings, one in which individual independence could be fostered best through human interconnectedness.

As with human nature, SDS's vision of human relationships stems from the Enlightenment tradition. A rejection of the Hobbesian and Lockean notions that man is inherently in competition with his fellow man, this line of the tradition contradicts dualism between man and society. Although also manifested in Marx's I/We dialectic, the most direct connection between SDS and this vision is certainly the communalism of Dewey and Mills. As Rich Tilman states in his C. Wright Mills: A Native Radical and His American Intellectual Roots:

Mills and Dewey neither advocated rugged individualism nor did they uncritically admire collectivism... In the final analysis, their ideal of community was significant, since it left individuals free to realize their inner desires and aspirations. For Dewey, in particular, collectivism

was just a new label for the American Dream, which for him was synonymous with individual fulfillment. Dewey [and] Mills were [both] "collectivists" in the sense that they wished to transcend atomistic individualism.⁴⁸

For Dewey and Mills, as for SDS, there was no real conflict between individualism and the well being of the community—in fact, true individual fulfillment was possible only within the community.

The third and final section of the value statement, that concerning the social system, is undoubtedly the centerpiece of *The Port Huron Statement*, and the *raison-d'être* of SDS as an organization.

As social system we seek the establishment of a democracy of individual participation, governed by two central aims: that the individuals share in those social decisions determining the quality and direction of his life; that society be organized to encourage independence in men and provide the media for their common participation.⁴⁹

This vision, once manifested, would have implications for both politics and economics.

Politically, democratic participation brought a number of principles to the fore: decision making of social consequence should fall upon public groups; politics should be seen as the process of collectively creating acceptable patterns of social relations; politics should bring people from isolation to community; political institutions should serve to clarify problems, both personal and social, in a manner instrumental to their solution. And, economically, participatory democracy implies that work should involve incentives worthier than money—it should be educative, creative, self-directing, encourage independence, and create a sense of respect and dignity for one's self and others.

Furthermore, economics is so personally decisive that the individual must share in its determination, and the economy is of enough social importance that its resources and means of production should be open to democratic participation and subject to

democratic regulation. And finally, “like the political ones, major social institutions—cultural, education, rehabilitative, and others—should be generally organized with the well-being and dignity of man as the essential measure of success.”⁵⁰ In essence, SDS sought to replace the reign of bureaucracy and oligarchy with personal relations and democracy—they sought to bring the institutions of society under human control.

The term “participatory democracy” itself comes, most directly, from Arnold Kaufman—a political science professor at the University of Michigan and an instructor of Hayden and most of the early SDSers—and his article “Human Nature and Participatory Democracy.” The concept of participatory democracy is also closely linked, again, with the political philosophy of John Dewey and C. Wright Mills. The idea of small community based “publics” as the foundation of a democratic polity is synonymous with SDS’s notion of a participatory democracy. Yet, ultimately, this concept of democracy is one that goes all the way back to the more radical elements of Thomas Jefferson’s thought and the whole of the American Radical tradition.⁵¹

Accepting the plasticity of human nature, and accepting that the ideal of human relationships is a union of the individual and the community, participatory democracy rejects the entire premise of republicanism. Embodied in the Madisonian U.S. Constitution, republican democracies are concerned with what the political structure can do *for* man, in terms of stabilizing the community, protecting human rights, and maintaining social order. Democracies of participation, those sanctioned by the American radical tradition from Jefferson, through Dewey and Mills, and to SDS, are concerned more with what the political structure can do *to* man. Political participation, in

this conception, is vital to the development of man's potential as an intellectual and emotional being, and an activity necessary for the individual to achieve fulfillment in life.

Virtually all American Leftist thought shares the fundamental principles of this vision of society. Yet, SDS differed from this tradition in (at least) one significant way. Beyond trying to create a democracy of participation in conjunction with the existing political systems, SDS *was* a participatory democracy. All the decisions that effected the organization—the ideas that were to become programs of action, the decision to create *The Port Huron Statement*, and especially the form and content of the statement itself—were all debated and made by the organization as a whole. At Port Huron, there were no votes and no majority rule—all ideas were discussed and argued until the participants reached consensus. For SDS, the ultimate justification for creating a participatory democracy was not abstraction or theory; the ultimate and only justification they need was the feelings—feelings of fulfillment, community, empowerment, accomplishment—that set in as they lived what was for most only an idea. And when the Port Huron process ended, in the early morning hours of a mid-summer day in 1962, the members of SDS knew, with all certainty, that each individual needed to experience what they had to truly become a human being.

Conclusion

When SDS was borne in 1960, it was an intellectual organization dedicated to propagating leftist ideas and guiding a nascent and diffuse New Left toward restructuring the fundamental principles and institutions of modern American society. As I have tried to illustrate, they had a complicated and broad intellectual heritage that gave them unique perspective among New Left organizations. The heart of this heritage—a heart coursing

with the ideas of Albert Camus and C. Wright Mills—inculcated them with an ideology of direct action based on intellectual analyses of the institutions they sought to change. This intellectual tapestry, a step away from any ideology or organization that had come before them in American history, put them in a position to draw from the mass of alienated and malcontented American youth and, possibly, to create a modern permanent Left in American politics.

Yet, along the path of their historical development, SDS moved away from the intellectual character that had guided them since their inception. In essence, the tension inherent in their intellectual composition—a tension between direct action and intellectual analysis—proved impossible to maintain as the organization grew beyond the logistical capacities of its structure. James Miller's Democracy is in the Streets (1985) chronicles the growth of SDS during their early years, and claims, correctly I believe, that SDS collapsed because its commitment to practicing democracy became impossible as the organizations membership swelled after 1963. In addition, as Todd Gitlin claims in his book The Whole World is Watching, the young men and women who joined SDS after 1963 (the year they lead the first anti-war march on Washington) had a conception of SDS created by the mass media—a conception very different from that of SDS's original members.

From the beginning, SDS had navigated the road between Camus (direct action) and Mills (intellectual analysis) through their democratic decision making process. And, so long as the organization was small and all its members were committed to bridging the gap between these divergent intellectual paths, SDS was able to create programs and documents that embodied both Camus and Mills. Yet, as their organizational roster filled

with members who did not have SDS's intellectual background and did not share SDS's commitment to *both* direct action and intellectual analysis, such discussions and compromises became impossible. And, as these new members joined SDS under the auspices of the protest march, they believed SDS should dedicate itself to like-minded projects. Thus, with the creative tension between Camus and Mills destroyed, SDS went in the direction of the whims of its new members—direct confrontation at all costs.

By 1965, the calculated intellectual rebellion SDS had been trying to instigate had devolved into a anti-intellectual mass revolt concerned more with spectacle and media coverage than creating a permanent Leftist political movement. When SDS and the student movement are remembered, the visions they conjure up are usually from this period of chaos and anarchy. The early history of SDS—a history replete with thoughtful analysis, intellectual focus, and a deft perception of what role they should play in society—plays little part in how SDS is remembered. Thanks in large part to Miller's Democracy is in the Streets the character of the early SDS is no longer lost to historical irrelevance. In this essay, I have tried to reach an understanding of the ideas and sentiments of this group of young intellectuals in order to come to terms with why they wrote what they wrote and did what they did.

SDS's thoughts and actions are inexorably linked to the historical context of the early 1960's. Yet, I have tried to show that the ideas behind their motives were, in part, a-temporal. They were reacting to a perceived crisis in American society; but, they were also reacting to an individual existential crisis stemming from the wholly unfulfilling and inadequate patterns of life their society had set out for them. Rejecting the prospects of joining this society, these young intellectuals turned to a tradition of thinkers who

purported a vision of society that made sense to them—a democratic society in which their grievances might be ameliorated. In accepting and reinterpreting the ideas of this American Leftist tradition, they, in fact, became a part of it. As such, SDS represents the most modern manifestation of an American intellectual tradition—a tradition of participatory democracy, individual liberty, and personal fulfillment—that has survived since Thomas Jefferson and Tom Paine.

No other organization made its presence felt throughout the 1960's like Students for a Democratic Society. *The Port Huron Statement* became the cornerstone of the American New Left, and moved hundreds of thousands of American students out of apathy and into a world of activism, protest, and, eventually, revolt. What inspired Tom Hayden and SDS to intellectual action were currents of thought and emotion that were felt by the totality of American youth. And, it was these currents, translated by a group of young intellectuals, through *The Port Huron Statement* and into SDS as an organization, that became the impetus for the rebellion of a generation. And, by touching on them, by explaining them in a language stirring to the young, and by providing a medium through which they could act, SDS helped set into motion the machinery of a mass student movement. Yet, *Port Huron* was a process, an intellectual process of solidifying the vision and values of a group of young idealists who believed that they could re-make America. It was the sum of years of anxiety and alienation, education—both in the class room and outside it—experience—on civil rights battlefields and with controversy on campus, and hope—inspired by a new found empowerment and a faith in democracy. It developed over time, both reacting to and effecting fundamental changes

in America. And, to understand it, one must understand the context of its birth, the purpose beneath its inception, and the values that lie at its heart.

End Notes

- ¹ Tom Hayden, "The American Student 1960: Why This Erupting Generation?," *The Michigan Daily*, September 16, 1960; "Who are the student boat-rockers?," *Mademoiselle*, August, 1961, p. 6; From the *Port Huron Statement* of Students for a Democratic Society, pp. 1-2. Hereafter cited as *PHS*.
- ² Including J. Edgar Hoover, who started an FBI file on Hayden in February of 1960.
- ³ The image of the New Left, a group of core organizations surrounded by the movement as a whole, comes from Jack Newfield's *A Prophetic Minority*, (New York: The New American Library, 1966).
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 30.
- ⁵ Tom Hayden, "Letter From an Albany Jail," December 11, 1998, SDS papers: Series 1, No. 3; also see *Reunion*, pg. 44 and 73.
- ⁶ Tom Hayden, "Convention Document #1, Manifesto Notes: A Beginning Draft, March 19, 1962," SDS Papers: Series 1, No. 6, p. 2. Hereafter to be cited as "Convention #1."
- ⁷ Tom Hayden, "Politics, the Individual, and SDS," SDS papers: Series 1, No. 6, p.1. Originally published as an SDS pamphlet.
- ⁸ C. Wright Mills, quoted in "Convention #1," p. 3.
- ⁹ Hayden, "Convention #1," pg. 2. These sentences are copied, almost exactly in the *PHS*; the questions, in fact, come from the *PHS* version.
- ¹⁰ Hayden, "Politics, the Individual, and SDS," p. 2.
- ¹¹ Tom Hayden, "A Letter to the New (Young) Left," *The New Student Left*, Mitchell Cohen and Dennis Hale, ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), p. 4.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- ¹⁴ The "radicalism" of John Dewey is, of course, a matter of much contention. The two most recent, and perhaps best, intellectual biographies of Dewey are Robert Westbrook's *John Dewey and American Democracy* (1991) and Ryan Alan's *John Dewey and the High-Tide of American Liberalism* (1995).
- ¹⁵ Hayden, "A Letter," p. 7.
- ¹⁶ Albert Camus, *The Plague* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991).
- ¹⁷ Hayden, *Reunion*, p. 76.
- ¹⁸ Albert Camus, *The Plague*, quoted in Hayden's *Reunion*, p. 76.
- ¹⁹ Albert Camus, *The Rebel* (New York: Vintage Books, 1956), p. 22; as quoted in *Reunion*, p. 77.
- ²⁰ Hayden, "Convention #1," pp. 2-3.
- ²¹ C. Wright Mills, *The New Men of Power* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948), p. 252.
- ²² C. Wright Mills, "The Structure of Power in American Society," Irving Louis Horowitz, ed., *Power, Politics and People* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963) p. 35.
- ²³ Irving Louis Horowitz, *C. Wright Mills: An American Utopian* (New York: The Free Press, 1983), p. 229.
- ²⁴ C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956) pg. 300; "The Structure of Power," *Power, Politics, and People*, p. 37.
- ²⁵ C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 187.
- ²⁶ C. Wright Mills, "On the New Left," *Studies on the Left* (City: Publisher, 1960?) Vol. No. p. 67. This "letter" was published several times under several different titles.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 64.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 65.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 68.
- ³⁰ Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, p. 187.
- ³¹ Hayden, *Reunion*, p. 79.
- ³² Hayden, "Student Social Action," p. 5.
- ³³ Tom Hayden, *Radical Nomad: Essays on C. Wright Mills and his Times* (Ann Arbor: Center for Research on Conflict Resolution, 1964), p. 113.
- ³⁴ Tom Hayden, "To: SDS executive committee, others; Re: manifesto," SDS papers: Series 1, No. 6, p. 11.
- ³⁵ Hayden, "Convention #1," p. 3.

³⁶ Hayden, Reunion, p. 94.

³⁷ SDS, *PHS*, p. 4.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 4-5.

⁴⁰ Tom Hayden, "Convention Document #2 (Manifesto Notes: Problems of Democracy)," SDS Papers: Series 1, No. 6, p. 2. Hereafter to be cited as "Convention #2."

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7. The bibliography is replete with works conveying the spectrum of these negative conceptions of man's nature. Furthermore, Arnold Kaufman's "Human Nature and Participatory Democracy," Carl J. Friedrich, ed., Nomos III: Responsibility (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1960)(also on the lists), summarizes in detail the major arguments and exposes their weaknesses. As I will discuss later, Kaufman had a direct effect on those SDSers from the University of Michigan.

⁴² Hayden, "Convention #2," p. 2.

⁴³ SDS, *PHS*, p. 5.

⁴⁴ Hayden, Reunion, p. 94.

⁴⁵ SDS, *PHS*, p. 5.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁴⁸ Rich Tilman, C. Wright Mills: A Native Radical and his American Intellectual Roots (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1984), pp. 183-4.

⁴⁹ SDS, *PHS*, p. 6.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁵¹ For an in depth exploration of Jefferson's radical thinking see Richard Matthews The Radical Politics of Thomas Jefferson (1984) or If Men Were Angel's: James Madison and the Heartless Empire of Reason (1995). Both Published by the University of Kansas Press, Lawrence.

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**END OF
TITLE**