

The Contribution to the Problems of Public Activities of the Student Movement in the United States of America in the 1960s

In many aspects, the 1960s were a turning point in the history of the post-war world. Great number of political, as well as social and cultural turbulences took place during the decade, changing the world in a significant way. Social movements (which student movement was a part of – and an important one, one should add) contributed to these changes in many ways. After the “silent fifties” which almost completely lacked any form of political or social involvement of ordinary citizens, the sixties brought wave after wave of social disturbances, commotions, and even riots. First the civil rights movement, then the anti-war and student movements, tried to transform the American society into a better one. Students gathered around the issue of the Vietnam War, turning it into a cornerstone of their political agenda and even though they participated in a number of other (often more constructive) activities, these got necessarily overshadowed by the war issue. In order to gain more members, the student movement was forced to adopt more militant and violent kind of actions, which eventually estranged its members to the majority society. When we take into consideration the distorted lens of the major media, it is no doubt that the Americans mostly disregarded the student movement. The movement tried to overcome this vicious circle by adopting even more radical type of actions which led only to further alienation from the society. In the end, the movement fell victim to its own long suppressed problems and imploded from inside. A fragment of the most radical members went underground, trying to wage war using terrorist-like methods, but even their fight couldn't last long. But despite its inglorious end, the student movement was an important part of the 1960s and even today remains an interesting phenomenon.