

# 1968: Music as Rhetoric in Social Movements

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In 1968 social movements sparked rhetorical discourses which occurred in many nations and on hundreds of colleges and in communities across the United States. These rhetorical discourses ultimately changed the direction of human events. Sometimes these points of ideological protests shared views on specific issues, especially demonstrations against the Vietnam War, but each conflict was also its own local conflict. There is no evidence that any specific group organized the protests, or that speakers motivated demonstrations, or that the rhetoric of one protest caused other protests. Yet, the protests were not just spontaneous fires that happened to occur in the same year. So, how is it that so many protesters shared the desire for change and shared rhetoric, but each protest was sparked by local issues? Answering that question provides insight into how the rhetoric of social movements occurred in 1968.

Many scholars call for the study of the social movements of the 1960s. Jensen (1996) argues, “The events of the 1960s dramatically increased the interest in studying social movements and forced rhetorical scholars to reconsider their methods for studying public discourse” (p. 28). To Lucas (2006), “Words became weapons in the cultural conflict that divided America” (x). Schippa (2001) wrote, “Many accounts identify the 1960s as a turning point. For better or for worse, there was a confluence of changing rhetorical practices, expanding rhetorical theories, and opportunities for rhetorical criticism. The cultural clashes of the 1960s were felt perhaps most acutely on college campuses. The sufficiency of deliberative argument and public address can be said to have been called into question, whether one was an antiwar activist who hated LBJ’s war in Vietnam or a pro-establishment stalwart trying to make sense of the rhetoric of protest and demonstration. Years later, scholars would characterize war itself as rhetorical. What counted as rhetorical practice was up for grabs”(p. 261).

*First, this paper will frame the protest movement of 1968. Then, we will search for the common factors that shaped the protests of 1968, focusing on the role of music. This analysis will provide insight into how music became a rhetorical force in a significant social movement of the 20th Century.*

## 1968

On January 1, 1968, American soldiers were fighting for democracy in Vietnam and to stop communism in Southeast Asia. President Lyndon Johnson promised there was “light at the end of the tunnel” (Anderson, 1988). On January 30, the Viet Cong launched the Tet Offensive; it took a month for U.S. forces and the South Vietnamese Army to regain control from the VC. By December 31, 1968, the war was a “stalemate,” a label applied by CBS News Anchor Walter Cronkite.

On January 1, 1968, Martin Luther King led the Civil Rights Movement, which was marked by its non-violence reaction to racism in the South. On April 4, an assassin killed MLK in Memphis. Riots broke out in more than 100 U.S. cities in wake of the assassination. On April 6, Eldridge Cleaver of the Black Panther Party shot it out with Oakland Police.

On January 1, 1968, The Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) had formed chapters on many college campuses to seek change through protests. Throughout the year, police used violence against peaceful demonstrations on college campuses and at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. By December 31, 1968 the Weather Underground formed at University of Michigan, a group dedicated to violent government change.

On January 1, 1968, many the veterans of World War II were sending their children to college. World War II veterans were heroes who had defeated Fascism. On March 16, U.S. soldiers killed up to 500 Vietnamese people who lived in the village of My Lai in Vietnam. By December 31, 1968, the soldiers returning from Vietnam were spit on by the American public.

On January 1, 1968, Lyndon Johnson looked certain to be re-elected President of the United States. Then the Tet offensive occurred and Eugene McCarthy ran a surprising strong, anti-war campaign in the New Hampshire primary on March 12. LBJ withdrew as a nominee for president on March 31. By December 31, 1968, pro-war Republican Richard Nixon was the president elect.

On June 5, 1968, the anti-war efforts and the optimism of the youth rebellion reached its zenith as Robert Kennedy won the California Democracy Party primary for president. On June 6, 1968, Kennedy died after being shot in the head. By August 29, Vice President Hubert Humphrey, a pro-war candidate, won the Democratic

nomination for president, even though most Democratic primary voters had supported anti-war candidates. The Chicago convention in August is marked by demonstrations in the streets and violence by police.

On January 1, 1968, "We Shall Overcome" was the anthem of non-violent social change. By December 31, 1968, the music world rocked to The Beatles' "Revolution" and to songs by many artists promoting the psychedelic culture, especially The Beatles' "Yellow Submarine."

On January 1, 1968, Charles de Gaulle was French President and a hero of World War II. In May 1968, first students and later workers took to the streets. By December 31, President de Gaulle's power and prestige were almost gone.

On January 1, 1968, a strong Soviet ally was ruler of Czechoslovakia. On January 5, Alexander Dubček was leading the government, marking a period of reform and political freedom called the Prague Spring. On August 21, 1968, tanks entered Prague and the Soviets quashed the Prague Spring. Czechoslovakia was back in the Soviet orbit by December 31.

On January 1, 1968, Mexico City was preparing to host the Summer Olympics. Student demonstrations for social and political change began in July. On October 2, the Mexico military gunned down demonstrators in the Tlatelolco Square. By December 31, the black salute of two U.S. athletes on the Olympic medal stand is the rhetorical vision of the Mexico games.

On January 1, 1968, young people around the world believed they could change the world through peaceful demonstrations. By December 31, 1968, leaders promoting non-violence were dead, beaten, and/or arrested. The pessimism of December replaced the optimism of the previous January.

Just a note. Imagine the difference in the direction of history if Robert Kennedy would have been inaugurated President of the United States in January, 1969, instead of Richard Nixon? 1968 was a defining year.

### **The Rhetoric of Transformation**

In 1950, Kenneth Burke in *The Rhetoric of Motives* proposed "The New Rhetoric" (p. 43). Burke argued that rhetoric was more than Aristotle's art of persuasion. Rhetoric was the lived texts a person referenced as part of formulating identity. Burke explained (p. 4): "The prose reference is clearly rhetorical. It occurs in a work written with a definite audience mind, and for a definite purpose. It was literature for use." Literary work united people together because the shared experience of engaging with the literature created for some people a sense of shared identity. Our contention is that music of the 1960s was the "literature for use" that created a sense of shared identity among the thousands of people protesting in the U.S. and around the world. Poetry [e.g. music] is not just an "exercise," explained Burke (p. 5), but an act that translates "political controversy to high theologic terms...." Poetry provides a means by which, "The range of images that can be used for concretizing the process of transformation is limited only by the imagination and ingenuity of poets," continues Burke (p. 12).

Burke notes that one motivation for transformational identity is family (p. 13). This became relevant in the 1960s as the children of the veterans of World War II could reflect identification with family by also going into military service. Or, the fight against Fascism of their parents in the 1940 could be juxtaposed with the efforts to stop world communism in the 1960s, e.g. by stopping the Viet Cong in Vietnam. No poet summed up the ideology of military service better than Staff Sgt. Barry Sadler. His *The Ballad of the Green Berets* released in 1966 sold over nine million records. The fourth stanza describes the identification and transformation of men.

Silver wings upon their chest  
These are men, America's best  
One hundred men we'll test today  
But only three win the Green Beret

Another source for identity transformation could occur because people considered the ideals of American society against its actual performance, explains Burke. Identification begins with a "search for father," continues Burke (p. 11), but some people evolve themselves into a new identity based upon their place in contemporary times.

In his inaugural address, President John Kennedy (a war hero) had urged people to commit themselves to something greater than themselves. The most famous lines from that speech were:

And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country.

Clarke (2011) notes that Kennedy's words had an immediate impact on Americans. "Praise for the address was so extravagant that it was difficult to believe almost half of the electorate had preferred Nixon," writes Clarke (p. 11). "Most who responded to this clarion call believed the new president was calling them to patriotic public service, rather than presenting a philosophy of government policy," writes Windt (1990, p. 23). Clarke described the place of the speech in history. "A speech for the ages like Kennedy's inaugural address usually requires the convergence of a dramatic event, a pivotal historical moment, a skillful orator, eloquent words, and an audience hungering to hear them," explains Clarke (p. 222). "All five were present for Kennedy." The assassination of Kennedy, and later Robert Kennedy, may have motivated many people to keep the Kennedy idealism alive by demanding social change. As Burke states, "Since imagery built about the active, reflexive, and passive forms of death (killing, self-killing, and being killed) so obviously contributes to dramatic intensity, and since thoughts of death are so basic to human motivation, we usually look no farther to account their use" (p. 13). Martin Luther King, Jr., also assassinated, in his "I Have A Dream" speech in 1963 had cast the Civil Rights Movement as a clash between the reality of American Democracy against the promise of the American Dream. To King, only when everyone has freedom will everyone in America truly be "free at last."<sup>1</sup> Many of Bob Dylan's songs—"900 Hundred Miles From My Home," "A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall," "The Times They Are A-Changin'," "Blowin' In The Wind"—challenged people to view reality through the lens of idealism. The Beatles, The Doors, The Rolling Stones, Joan Baez, Pete Seeger, Aretha Franklin, Peter, Paul and Mary, Country Joe & Fish were among the thousands singing songs that challenged the dominant ideology on Civil Rights, the Vietnam War, and the social order. These songs offered transformation leading to a new identity for the individual, the reformers, and the world. In Poland, young people saw the world in a similar way. "We were the first generation to be born after the war," explains Bogucka, (2004, p. 20). "We entered a world constructed by parents, who had survived war and poverty and built a peaceful order for us that reflected their dream of peace, quiet and some kind of prosperity. But our dreams were different. We wanted personal freedom, freedom from state brutality and from the watchful eye of society," writes Bogucka. In Bulgaria, students had "a vision of a different, more humane world, in which every individual could achieve his/her intellectual potential," explains Popov (2004, p. 49).

The Vietnam War became a crucible of social conflict. As Burke pointed out, war required communal action (p. 22), but Americans did not rally to Vietnam as they had World War II after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Rather the war required a draft to meet the military needs in Vietnam, the mounting death tolls, and the horrors of war on the nightly news made Vietnam a personal question for males eligible for the draft in the 1960s and their families, who knew the sacrifice of war. But, Vietnam was just a symptom of a diseased world—the Cold War, nuclear annihilation, colonialism were the real diseases in the post-war world.

Burke assigns blame to scientists who worked for Nazis; students at University of Wisconsin blamed Dow Chemical, the makers of the napalm dropped on villages in Vietnam, which came to the campus to recruit more scientists (Maraniss, 2003). The method of science provides some moral cover for the inventors of tools of warfare, points out Burke. Such were the claims of "professional austerity" made by the scientists working for the Nazis (p. 32). Burke then attacks those arguments: "Yet, willy nilly, a science takes on the moral qualities of the political or social movements with which it becomes identified.... But it does make clear the fact that one's morality as a specialist cannot be allowed to do duty for one's morality as a citizen" (p. 31).

The Vietnam War was the catalyst that transformed the identities of people in the 1960s because they did not want to be drafted, because they feared the threat of nuclear annihilation, because the institutions of government sought their conformity to a logic of human insanity and destruction. People looking for identity outside of the social order will seek "to round out their identity as participants in a common substance of meaning," explains Burke (p. 23). For Burke, poets provide that "substance of meaning." For the people opposed to the war, to nukes, to napalm, to the Cold War and for people who sought love instead, the musicians were the poets.

### Unifying elements

We have identified five unifying factors which contributed to the spirit of unrest in 1968.

1. Satellites made it much easier for television newscasters to report events from around the world to people around the world since stories could be reported live or within hours of occurring. News coverage of protests, of the war in Vietnam, of assassinations was shared by people around the world. A protest in a major city became world news.

2. Corporate structures in the music industry made the world wide distribution of records possible. For example, the album *Yellow Submarine* was the top selling album in 35 countries.

3. Car radios, record players, and portable transistor radios meant that the music of protest, social justice, and youth rebellion were available to anyone almost anywhere. People could join the protests by listening to The Beatles, or Bob Dylan, or the Rolling Stones, or the Doors, or Country Joe and the Fish, or Joan Baez....

4. The music industry provided the prophets of social change. Peter, Paul, and Mary sang Bob Dylan's "Blowin' In the Wind" and Pete Seeger's "If I Had A Hammer" during the March on Washington. Barry McGuire challenged the premises of the Cold War in "Eve of Destruction":

And you tell me  
Over and over and over again my friend  
Ah, you don't believe  
We're on the eve of destruction

The Beatles "Revolution" came to the point:

You say you want a revolution  
Well, you know  
We all want to change the world  
You tell me that it's evolution  
Well, you know  
We all want to change the world

Listening to the radio or playing the recordings of popular musicians was a call for social change.

5. In the 1960s, rhetorical visions (Bormann, 1972) united people together behind common causes. The Civil Rights movement, a prevalent protest movement in the 1960s, included the rhetorical visions invoked by demonstrations in Selma and Birmingham, Alabama, the assassination of Medgar Evers, and particularly "I Have A Dream" speech delivered during the March on Washington by Martin Luther King. The assassinations of John F. Kennedy, King, and Robert Kennedy were rhetorical visions shared by millions. The Vietnam War created multiple rhetorical visions: monks self immolation in Saigon, the siege of Khe Sahn, Tet Offensive, a child hit by napalm. The tanks rolling into Prague indicated that the Soviet Union was going to defend its communist workers states. The Berlin War and the Cuban Missile Crisis were rhetorical visions of the Cold War. President John Kennedy invoked a shared experience in his inaugural address: "ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for your country." All of these rhetorical visions generated a visceral emotional response among many in the U.S. and around the world, creating a sense that the world political, social, and economic systems required changed.

### The News

In 1963 the *Huntley and Brinkley Report* expanded to 30 minutes, bringing it into competition with Walter Cronkite and the *CBS Evening News*. In 1962 Telestar satellites made it possible to broadcast live from Europe to the United States. By 1968, the American people were eating supper and watching the Tet Offensive live from Vietnam. Demonstrations at Columbia University were on the news in France, and the French students demonstrating in the streets of Paris were on the nightly news broadcasts.

The nightly news converted a war far away in Vietnam into a living room war. American people watched a monk immolate himself in protest against the government of South Vietnam.<sup>2</sup> So, was this a war to establish a democracy? The news showed a child running naked from American soldiers after being burned with napalm.<sup>3</sup> Nothing heroic about the photo. During Tet, a Vietnamese general executed a prisoner on American television.<sup>4</sup> Daily images like these burned Vietnam War into the consciousness of the veterans of World War II and their families, and little of the fighting in Vietnam reminded World War II soldiers of their service.

The Civil Rights movement was not just a Southern concern. Middle class white Americans watched Martin Luther King deliver his "I Have A Dream Speech" on television. These middle class, white Americans, who destroyed the Nazi war machine, watched from their homes as police beat unarmed Civil Rights marchers with clubs, turn dogs loose on them, and blasted non-violent demonstrators with fire hoses.

The American people watched the videotape of John Kennedy's assassination over and over in 1963<sup>5</sup> and saw Lee Harvey Oswald murdered live on television.<sup>6</sup> And, then in 1968 King was assassinated and Robert Kennedy was gunned down just when it seemed it had clinched the Democratic nomination for president.<sup>7</sup>

The television news delivered images of struggle into the living room. The black fist salute at the Olympics in 1968,<sup>8</sup> students occupying a building at Columbia University,<sup>9</sup> antiwar demonstrations at Berkeley,<sup>10</sup> and violence in the streets outside of the Democratic Convention.<sup>11</sup> The news brought the race riots in Detroit<sup>12</sup> and in Watts<sup>13</sup> into middle class homes. *The Ed Sullivan Show* introduced The Beatles to America.<sup>14</sup> By 1968, the Beatles, boys who needed a haircut in 1964, were into psychedelic drugs and music proclaiming in the album and then the movie, *Yellow Submarine*, that "All's you need is love."<sup>15</sup> Television brought the world to Americans. Demonstrations occurred in Paris,<sup>16</sup> in Mexico,<sup>17</sup> Madrid,<sup>18</sup> and all around the world.

Even before the news switched to a 30-minute format, the network news believed it was their responsibility to keep the public informed on important issues, argues news historian Ponce de Leon (2015). He explains: "The networks took it as their mission to provide viewers with the essential information they needed in order to have a reasonable grasp of the issues of the day..." (p. 63). For example, explains Ponce de Leon, "Cold War conflicts, civil rights protests, urban riots, space launches and splashdowns, campus upheavals, the death of prominent statesmen, elections, and important political developments, impromptu interviews with newsmakers—all of these and more were presented to viewers through prime-time special reports." Frank McGee put together a story, "The Tunnel," that told the stories of East Berliners tunneling out of the East to freedom in West Berlin. Several specials recounted the conditions of African-Americans in the South. The space race was popular with the public. President Kennedy and Jacqueline were television stars. Demonstrations on campuses were fleshed out with specials on the teen revolution and the "Mini-skirt Rebellion." Newsmen went on combat patrols with the troops in Vietnam. A story that had a lot of impact in the U.S., says Ponce de Leon, was Morley Safer's report showing American troops burning down a village, Cam Ne. In that story, writes Ponce de Leon, "...US troops displayed a ruthlessness that conflicted with oft-repeated claims that the US was winning the 'hearts and minds' of the South Vietnamese peasantry" (p. 77). The Johnson Administration had a public relations disaster, said Ponce de Leon. General William Westmoreland, commander in Vietnam, told the American public that the "light was at the end of the tunnel" in the war. As Ponce de Leon points out, the Tet Offensive weeks later destroyed the credibility of both Johnson and the military (p. 77).

The world smoldered in the 1960s and was on fire by 1968 with each hot spot covered by the nightly news. College students entered universities in record numbers. Those students knew they lived in a world demanding change in the social and political systems. Idealism defeated segregation in the South and drove Lyndon Johnson from the White House. Why not end racism, sexism, and give individual liberties to everyone? Why not demonstrate to end the War in Vietnam when the option was a draft notice and then a rifle with orders to march through a rice paddy? Johnson and Nixon, capitalism and communism, wealth and poverty were the enemy. The system was corrupt and required change. That was the message delivered by the nightly news into every American home.

Participation in the process of change offered protesters identity. To Gregg (1971), "For many students, political protest can become the covering activity that conveys a sense of importance, power, exhilaration, and danger, all feeling related to self-affirmation and expression." Seeing the news on television or hearing it on the radio had a far reaching impact. For example, Nasson (2004) explains the impact in Africa. "Certainly, television viewers in Southern Rhodesia and Zambia could watch live news coverage of student riots in Paris and the massive anti-Vietnam war demonstration in London's Grosvenor Square during October," explains Nasson (p. 45). In South Africa, Nasson reports the government limited access to television; people instead relied on print or radio. "For the radio news and current affairs services of the South African Broadcasting Corporation there was a sobering lesson to be drawn from the unrest overseas," continues Nasson.

### Car Radios

From 1927 until television sets became a feature in American homes of the 1950s, radio was the primary means of mass communication. The radio networks provided music, drama, news, and sports (Barnouw, 1970; Smith, ; Hilmes, 1997; Douglas, 1987; Smulyan, 1994) to more than ninety percentage of American homes by the 1940s (Silverblatt, et. al., 2014, 78). "Twenty-six million households owned at least one radio and spent an average of five hours daily listening to the offerings of three national networks," writes Hilmes (p. 183). The most popular serials had "a radio audience measuring in the millions," points out Smith (p. 4). Television replaced the radio in the living room in the 1950s. Radio migrated to the car, particularly after 1963 when transistors made radios portable (Douglas, p. 221). Radio stations left the networks and became independent stations playing popular music. "As the 'disc jockey,' previously featured in some local morning and late nighttime slots, slowly took over the entire radio schedule," explains Hilmes, "network-distributed programs declined to nearly zero" (p. 272). Music stations moved to the Top 40 format, playing the best selling records of the week. The music attracted teens driving automobiles to listen these stations. Instead of listening to the radio with the family in the evenings, an American custom since 1927, teens by 1960 were listening to their music in the seclusion of their car or while meeting up with their peers. "DJs, in an effort to earn listener loyalty, cultivated a distinct generational identity among teenagers, addressing them as cool, different, in opposition to those who could blanket the airwaves with Mantovani and his orchestra," explains Douglas (p. 222).

Percy Faith ("Theme From a Summer Place") topped the rock 'n roll sales charts in 1960. Faith's easy listening notes played by his band were in competition in a world in transformation. The world of the car radio was racially integrated, unlike segregated America; Chubby Checker, Brook Benton and Dian Washington, and Sam Cooke also were among the most popular singers in 1960. "By 1954 there were no less than two hundred stations in this category (appealing to black consumers), and that number rose to four hundred by 1956," notes Hilmes (p. 273). Many DJs promoted "breakout listening," which became a form of youth rebellion, points out Douglas (p. 222). "Radio...was *the* media outlet where cultural and industrial battles over how much influence black culture was going to have on white culture were staged and fought," explains Douglas (222). In 1964 The Beatles dominated record sales with nine of the top 100 records sold that year.<sup>19</sup> "I Want To Hold Your Hand" by The Beatles sold more than a million copies in Great Britain and more than five million records in the U.S.; it reached No. 1 in Australia, Netherlands, Norway, and West Germany.<sup>20</sup> Rock n' Roll music attracted millions of teenagers from around the world to a place outside of parental, and to some degree, social control. Corporate promotion and distribution made music available around the world. The car radio, transistor radios, and record players made rock 'n roll music available to a world of teenagers. Rock 'n Roll became the international language of people under the age of 30.

### The Music Industry

Eyerman and Jamison (1995) contend that the recording industry provided listeners and radio stations across the world with access to the most popular, international artists in the 1960s. "The changing structure of the music industry is also important to consider when discussing the context of production and the changing relations between performer, performance and audiences in the 1960-70s," explain Eyerman and Jamison (p. 451). Instead of listening to music at live performances, people did a lot more listening in private because of car radios, portable radios, and record players. They point out that this new economic model made artists like Bob Dylan and Joan Baez commercial successes. The irony is that the music industry spread the anti-establishment, anti-war, anti-capitalism of the youth movement to young people around the world while making the singers of the anti-establishment music financially wealthy.

This corporate music world meant that "Popular music, mass-marketed not just nationally but globally, came to have a strongly unifying effect on an entire generation, strengthening the sense of a cohesive youth movement sharing common cause across national borders," explains Adlington (2015, p. 20).

### Rhetorical Visions

President Lyndon Johnson was concerned that there was a worldwide conspiracy behind the demonstrations on 300 U.S. college campuses (Suri, 2007, p. 229) and around the world. However, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) reached a different conclusion. Demonstrations were "shaped in every instance by local conditions," according to the CIA report, but there were similarities among protesters, which was a "radical concept of industrial society" (Suri, p. 217). O'Hagan (2008) believes the one common issue around the world was opposition to the war in Vietnam.<sup>21</sup> Sale (1972) indicates that the Students for a Democratic Society had 40,000 people who were members of chapters, but he discounts the role of the SDS in organizing a national or world wide effort. SDS made

“little effort to instigate action where none was visible and even less effort to coordinate action where it was planned,” Sale contends (p. 417). Events occurred so spontaneously on campuses that leadership did not have time to form or to guide events, Sale explains (p. 436), because many demonstrators belonged to no organization.

The connecting factor uniting demonstrations was rhetorical. The role of rhetoric in a social movement is to provide the language which becomes the meanings to challenge the gaps and inconsistencies in a society that motivates people to demonstrate, explain Johnston and Klandermans (1995). The very act of changing culturally understood meanings is a form of rebellion, writes Swidler (1995), which then motivates behavior changes. Groups that share meanings share ideology and create what Swidler calls “commonalities” (p. 38). Once commonalities are established among a group of people, the result is shared action, which creates group “relationships,” explains Melucci (1995, p. 43). “The trick for activists is to bridge public discourse and people’s experiential knowledge, integrating them in a coherent frame that supports and sustains collective action,” argues Gamson (1995, p. 85). The shared meanings is what identifies who belongs to the group and who is outside of the group, argues Fine (1995, p. 129). In effect, social movements need to create a common rhetoric.

Rhetorical visions “chain out” through members of the group to create a common culture and a shared identity, theorizes Bormann (1972, p. 397). People who share and participate in the rhetoric become participants in a drama. “A member dramatizes a theme that catches the group and causes it to chain out because it hits a common psychodynamic chord or a hidden agenda item or their common difficulties vis-à-vis the natural environment, the socio-political systems, or the economic structures,” explains Bormann (p. 399). “The group grows excited, involved, more dramas chain out to create a common symbolic reality filled with heroes and villains.”

As we point out in our discussion of the news, there were many dramas in 1960s that became rhetorical visions. Kennedy’s inaugural address called people to action and then his assassination made him a martyr. The March on Washington demanded action from Congress and featured Martin Luther King delivering “I Have A Dream.” Violence against non-violent marchers in Selma, Birmingham, and through the South were nightly news events in the homes of the white middle class. The Cold War dramas in Berlin and Cuba led to atomic bomb shelters in every community, the yellow sign reminding people that atomic warfare was this close. The television news delivered the rhetorical visions of the war in Vietnam, demonstrations against university administrations, and anti-war demonstrations. Then came 1968: Tet, assassinations of the leaders of social change, the Democratic convention, and riots in Paris, Madrid, and Mexico City.

The music of the 1960s invoked these rhetorical visions, restating the rhetoric every time people turned on the car radio or listened to the corporate, international music releases of Bob Dylan, The Beatles, Pete Seeger, Peter, Paul, and Mary, Barry McGuire, The Doors, Country Joe and The Fish, Simon and Garfunkel, Credence Clear Water Revival, James Brown, Sly and the Family Stone, Curtis Mayfield, The Rolling Stones, Phil Ochs, The Byrds, Aretha Franklin, Janis Joplin, and Nina Simone. People did not even need to be at the original event. They may have watched the original performance on television, but in any case listening to the music on car radios, records, or transistor radios allowed millions more to join the cause by listening to the music.

Empathic Resonance (Adams-Price, 1998; Adams-Price, et al., 2006; Bertelson, 1996) occurs when the audience members share an emotional connection with the artist. Martin Luther King, Jr., delivered “I Have A Dream” to hundreds of thousands who joined the March on Washington. They heard Bob Dylan play “The Times They Are A-Changin’.” Joan Baez sang “Only A Pawn In Their Game,” song recounting the recent murder of Mississippi Civil Rights leader Medgar Evers. Peter, Paul, and Mary performed “Blowin’ In the Wind” (Dylan) and Pete Seeger’s “If I Had A Hammer.” “We Shall Overcome” connected the events that day in Washington, D.C. to the very roots of the civil rights movement.

President Kennedy promised a time for hope in his inaugural address, and people followed him. Then he was assassinated, but the social commitment he advocated sparked a commitment for change among the people coming of age in the 1960s. Events demanded action through the 1960s. Dylan, Baez, Seeger, the Beatles, Peter, Paul, and Mary, et al. invoked the rhetorical visions, invoked the Empathetic Resonance, and asked the listeners of their music what they were going to do about the state of the world.



## Music

Music provided an alternative reality, argues Chenoweth (1971). “Many adults have become increasingly baffled by the rhetoric and behavior of youths who have either withdrawn from society or become advocates of revolution,” explained Chenoweth. Chenoweth explains how some musicians contributed to this sense of withdrawal. The chaotic nature of Hendrix music creates a place for people to disappear from the real world and live in the moment, explained Chenoweth (p. 30). To Jefferson Airplane love created a new reality, but also one where love could create pain or love was fleeting (p. 36). However, Chenoweth argues reality always trumped the worlds of music. They can’t come up with a way to create a new reality because music and love ultimately end and the nukes remain (45).

## Prophets

The social movements of the 1960s require a new rhetorical paradigm, writes Jensen (1996). “The events of the 1960s dramatically increased the interest in studying social movements and forced rhetorical scholars to reconsider their methods for studying public discourse,” argues Jensen (p. 28). Schippa (2001, p. 261) agrees: “What counted as rhetorical practice was up for grabs.” Windt (1990) describes the 1960s as a period when “ideological angels” engaged in “mortal combat with ideological demons” (p. 32). Daniel (2004, p. 26) explains the complexity of the social movements this way: “The remarkable simultaneity of the emergence of protest movements in Western and Eastern Europe – in fact, in America too – is unmistakably intriguing. By the same token, the differences in the structure and general aims of those movements are worthy of investigation: the democratic reforms in Czechoslovakia initiated by the January palace coup in the Central Committee in Prague, the nationalist/patriotic demonstrations of young students in Polish cities in March triggered by the premiere of a new production of Mickiewicz’s classic play *Dziady* (Forefathers) and the May ‘festival of disobedience’ on the streets of Paris staged by student groups of left-wing, Trotskyist, Maoist, and heaven knows what other ideologies. What element is common to all of them?”

Because the protest movements of the 1960s created new rhetorical paradigms, scholars sought ways to explain how social movements formed and how those social movements led to calls for change. To create persuasion in a social movement, explains Gregg, there needs to be a link between speaker and audience in which both parties to the communication share a sense of reality, critical thinking, and emotion. Joining a protest movement is an act of ego gratification, continues Gregg. To Gregg (p. 81), “In all three instances of protest rhetoric, the Woman’s Lib Movement, the student revolution, and the rhetoric of Black Power, we see reflections of intense feelings of self-deprecation and ego-deprivation.”

Rosenthal and Flacks (2016) argue that social movements require “frameworks of expression—both collective and individual” (p. 7). Understanding the rhetorical interactions between the collective and the individual is complicated, they write, because the process is a dialectical interaction, which means there is a degree of collective interaction which co-exists with individual experience. Quirk Cort (2013, p. 12), explains the dialectic: “The impact made in these cases [of social protest] was not as a result of any specific song itself, but rather came from the event itself in raising awareness of a cause and in attracting new supporters to it.” In the 1960s, Rosenthal and Flacks say, music created and popularized “frames through which events” were understood and contextualized by everyday people because they could understand the music, even if they did not hold a complex understanding of the issues, they explain (p. 7). To Burke (1969), for an issue to become a movement, the movement requires the poet, who translates the point of conflict into a rhetorical statement, explains Burke (1969). Then people find meaning in the rhetoric and join the group. Poetry is not just an “exercise,” explains Burke, but an act that translates “political controversy to high theologic terms...” (p. 5). Building on Burke, Brandon, Maupin, and Goodman (2017) point out that musicians were the poets of the 1960s social movement. “Music became the voice for the dissatisfied because music created a context where people came together for collective action,” they explain (p. 5). Just by listening or singing the song, people were participating in the ideals framed in the music. Eyerman and Jammison (1995) agree: “In both form and content, popular music in the early to mid-1960s functioned as another kind of social theory, translating the political radicalism that was expressed by relatively small coteries of critical intellectuals and political activists into a much different and far more accessible idiom” (p. 464).

Chenoweth (1971) argues that music becomes a force for collective action when the song creates a rhetorical shift in a person’s perspectives. Music allows people to leave the insanity of the real world and exists in a reality outside of culture, he explains. For example, guitarist Jimi Hendrix’s music<sup>22</sup> created a place for people to disappear from the real world and instead live in the moment, contends Chenoweth (p. 30). To Chenoweth, the rock

band Jefferson Airplane believed that love offered the opportunity to create a new reality.<sup>23</sup> Rosenthal and Flacks recount the role of The Beatles' "Yellow Submarine" at a demonstration at Berkeley, when as an act of collective unity, demonstrators began singing. "Perhaps for many in the Berkeley demonstration, the Beatles had become synonymous with the creation of one's own world, beyond the authority of parents or teachers, and it was that feeling, based on the memory of previous (very different) uses of "Yellow Submarine," to which the protesters responded," they recount (p. 92-93). To Brown (2008), The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Dylan, Baez, Peter, Paul, and Mary, the Smothers Brothers, Hendrix, and Arlo Guthrie were all part of the musical revolt of the 1960s. These groups challenged authority and provided a means of protesting against the social order by playing their songs, explains Brown. To Brown: "The very best protest music leads the listener to an understanding of a greater reality such that the listener participates in the discovery of this reality rather than simply being told to accept it as presented by someone else" (p. 145).

Brown identifies Bob Dylan as a "prophet" of the 1960s (p. 154). Fücks (2004) directly connects the music of the 1960s to the protest movement. "The Vietnam War, the American civil rights movement, the struggle against the colonial system in Southern Africa, the events in Czechoslovakia and the Chinese counter-revolution either outraged or inspired hundreds of thousands of activists; they fired imaginations and became the basis of action," explains Fücks (p. 8).

One characteristic of Dylan's lyrics, explains Brown, is that Dylan encourages people to answer the questions. Then the listeners can make a statement on the issues by responding to the lyrics. Dylan became the poet/song writer of the civil rights march during the March on Washington (August 28, 1963), which is most famous for Martin Luther King delivering the "I have a dream" speech. As King stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, Peter, Paul, and Mary sang two of Dylan's songs: "The Times They Are A-Changin'" and "Blowin' In the Wind."<sup>24</sup> The lyrics of these two songs framed the fundamental issues of the civil rights movement.

"A-Changin'" issues a series of challenges: 1. "Then you better start swimmin'

Or you'll sink like a stone" 2. Come senators, congressmen; Please heed the call; Don't stand in the doorway; Don't block up the hall 3. Your old road is Rapidly agin'. Please get out of the new one. Dylan warns the bystanders, the government leaders, and parents: "The times they are a-changin'." In a series of questions to the listeners, "Blowin' In the Wind" asks in each stanza how long can people accept the injustice done to other people? These are the questions of the first verse:

- How many roads must a man walk down  
Before you call him a man
- How many seas must a white dove sail  
Before she sleeps in the sand
- Yes, 'n' how many times must the cannon balls fly  
Before they're forever banned

Dylan does not claim to know the future; instead, he tells his listeners: The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind; The answer is blowin' in the wind. "He is not a prophet that brings the hope of renewal," explains Brown (2008, p. 157). "Rather, he delivers a blunt confrontation with a reality that is stripped of blinding ideological fantasy." Comotois (2005) has a similar assessment of Dylan. "Instead of direct attacks on a particular institution, person, or group," explains Comotois (p. 197), "Dylan obscured his target with art and poetry using complex language and intricate musical arrangements." Dunlap (2006) also sees Dylan as a poet: "In his rhetorical songs, like Emerson and Thoreau, Dylan focused on the need for people to consider injustice by examining their consciences" (p. 559).

When Dylan switched from writing folk music to performing folk rock in 1965, his change reflected the change in the protest movement as the war in Vietnam and demonstrations against college campus authority became new causes. Rodnitsky (2008) argues that after Dylan switched to electric, folk music faded. "Increasingly, however, the folk-rock protest song radiated general discontent and a vague, anti-establishment mood, as opposed to focusing on specific issues or evils," Rodnitsky explained (p. 109).

In this context, The Beatles were prophets because they represented the generation gap because of their long hair and sex appeal to teenyboppers when they appeared on "The Ed Sullivan Show" in 1964.<sup>25</sup> By 1968, The

Beatles had released “Revolution”<sup>26</sup> and then the album *Yellow Submarine* in January of 1969. As envisioned in the song, the revolution was about social change without violence. The song opens with John Lennon creating brief chaos on the guitar and a scream from Paul McCarthy. The lyrics acknowledge that “we all want to change the world,” but this was a change without destruction because then “it’s gonna be alright....” *Yellow Submarine* laid out the world envisioned by The Beatles. That state of the world was a sad place for Eleanor Rigby and the nowhere man, but people who could “Think For Yourself” could find a place in the world “With A Little Help From My Friends” and maybe with a little “Lucy in the Sky With Diamonds.” The Beatles had “the uncanny ability” to express “the attitudes and the anxieties” of the 1960s generation, explains Kaiser (p. 200, 1988).

The reach of The Beatles and pop music went beyond the U.S. and England. The Beatles songs played on state radio in Czechoslovakia, hinting at the world outside of the limitations of Prague (Tuma, 2004). Tuma points out that music had a similar impact on the struggle against white rule in South Africa. “By the end of the 1960s, to listen to British or American rock and modern folk music, especially protest songs like ‘Universal Soldier’ and ‘Blowin’ in the Wind’, was more or less the equivalent of listening to smuggled recordings of Martin Luther King’s speeches. The records, so to speak, protested on behalf of those, who listened to them,” argues Nasson (2004, p. 47). Adlington (2015) argues that rock music, particularly Dylan, The Beatles, and The Rolling Stones,<sup>27</sup> had an impact on social change in The Netherlands in 1968 because rock music expressed dissatisfaction with the social order. “Popular music, mass-marketed not just nationally but globally, came to have a strongly unifying effect on an entire generation, strengthening the sense of a cohesive youth movement sharing common cause across national borders,” contends Adlington (p. 20). In Japan (Mitsui, 2015) and Brazil (Gianmario, 2015), the politics of change and rock music were intertwined in social change. Siegfried (2008) explains the relationship between social movements and rock music. “In the 1960s, popular culture and social movements merged together to a certain degree,” writes Siegfried (p. 20). “Music largely defined the emotional character of protest movements while also lowering the entrance threshold for those youth who did not start out politically interested.” In effect, continues Siegfried, music made social change “a transnational revolution” (p. 66). Three elements united world youth in 1968, explains Pauer (2008): miniskirts, jeans, and The Beatles (p. 172).

In 1968, demonstrations occurred in major cities, universities,<sup>28</sup> and communities across the U.S. Demonstrations occurred in Italy, Poland, South Africa, Ireland, France, Brazil, England, Spain, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Germany, China, Vietnam, Mexico, Jamaica, Finland, Japan, Nigeria, Palestine, Israel, The Netherlands, Argentina, Uruguay, Ecuador, and Chile. U.S. President Lyndon Johnson ordered the Central Intelligence Agency to find what forces were behind the demonstrations; the CIA concluded that there was organization or planning unit. According to the CIA report, demonstrations were “shaped in every instance by local conditions” (Suri, 2007, p. 217). Similar efforts by the communist government in Poland had no better success in finding leaders of the movement, writes Bogucka (2004). “In the course of their investigations, the militia tried in vain to find links with other cities, emissaries or enemy networks,” reports Bogucka (p. 18). “The scale of the rebellion terrified the authorities and we were also surprised.” The music of the prophets (Dylan, The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Baez, etc., etc., etc.) spread around the world and young people joined the protests.

## Discussion

As we have already noted, Burke (1969) predicted in 1950 a generational gap between the parents around the world involved in World War II and their children becoming teenagers after 1960. The new corporate music world put the music of the post-war generation on the car radio, on 45 records, and on Top 40 radio stations around the world. Television news broadcast nightly the civil rights movement, demonstrations on the streets of Paris or at Columbia University, the Vietnam War, and tanks rolling into Prague. “The visual media i.e. photography and television played an especially decisive role in spreading the protest movement,” explains Fücks (2004, p. 8). “On the one hand, images of war zones in other parts of the world fuelled action and campaigns at home; on the other hand, movements created their own images to get their political messages across: sit ins; demonstrations; blockades; ‘happenings’; and open-air festivals were highly effective visual means of expression.” The musicians/poets gave voice to the aspiration of the post-war generation, creating a place where individuals found group identity, purpose, and a cause—just by listening to the music in South Africa, or Poland, or Japan, or small town, USA. Perhaps Woodstock was the epicenter of the movement in August, 1969, as the social movers of the 1960s evolved into the individuals described in 1977 by song writer Ian Dury as:

Sex and drugs and rock and roll  
 Is all my brain and body need  
 Sex and drugs and rock and roll  
 Are very good indeed<sup>29</sup>

The violent reaction to demonstrations changed the attitudes of many protestors to the concept of government and social change through political action. Cernoch (2004, p. 380) notes that 1968 was "a terrible year." John Kennedy, who rallied people to the Peace Corps and belief in the promise freedom and democracy, had been assassinated in 1963. Robert Kennedy promised a return to a world of idealism, and he was assassinated in 1968 running for president against what Johnson and Nixon stood for. Martin Luther King's dream of an America where "we allow freedom to ring"<sup>30</sup> was shot down in Memphis in 1968. As Cernoch points out: "Of course, one of the great lessons of 1968 was that when people try to change the world, other people who feel a vested interest in keeping the world the way it is will stop at nothing to silence them" (p. 380).

Lynskey (2011, p. 103) draws a similar conclusion, noting that the police action at the Democratic convention proved that peaceful demonstrators were going to meet with violence. Ponce de Leon (2015) sums up the impact of the Democratic convention. "With television cameras whirring, the Chicago police set upon them [demonstrators] with a fury that shocked many onlookers, including the press and anti-war delegates at the convention, who denounced the 'Gestapo tactics' of mayor Richard Daley's police," Ponce de Leon explains (p. 80). Lynskey (p. 119) notes that King's assassination changed the civil rights movement, citing civil rights leader Stokely Carmichael: "I think white America made its biggest mistake when it killed Dr. King last night," Carmichael stated a press conference, "because ... she killed all reasonable hope."<sup>31</sup> Sale (1972) contends that the Chicago convinced many members of the Students for a Democratic Society that violence had to met with violence. Sale concludes that "Chicago 1968 provided the definitive push over the line into activism and radicalism" (p. 476).

## Conclusion

Political frameworks of the 21st Century do not readily apply to 1968. The protesters were against the liberal, Democratic President Lyndon Johnson and the conservative, Republican President Richard Nixon. Both the United States (see the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War) and the Soviet Union (calls for freedom in Bulgaria, Poland, Czechoslovakia) were seen as oppressors of human rights and dignity. The U.S. military shot students demonstrating at Kent State while the Chicago Police beat demonstrations at the 1968 Democratic National Convention. The enemy was all government, called "the man" or "the establishment." Jack Weinberg, who was part of the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley, coined the phrase: "Don't trust anyone over 30."<sup>32</sup>

There are lessons from the social movement of 1968 that are applicable to social movements existing in 2017. Black Lives Matter, protests against the policies of U.S. President Donald Trump, radical Islamic groups like ISIS, Swingleft, Indivisible, and opposition to the Dakota pipeline are among the groups active in 2017.

**Lesson 1: have a unifying rhetoric.** The Occupy Wall Street Movement, sometimes called We are the 99% knew what they were against, but they could not articulate what they were for and what changes would be required to take wealth from the 1% and give it to the other 99%. The group left a lasting impression that common people were being screwed by the government, a sentiment that played into Donald Trump's successful presidential campaign, but the social discontent with banks and corporations remains nebulous.

**Lesson Two: The Prophets.** Black Lives Matter has a clear rhetorical statement, which works every time an innocent black person is shot by the police. But, the rhetoric falls apart when police shoot an innocent white person. Jamar Clark was a black male shot by Minneapolis Police in 2015; Justine Damond was a white woman killed by a Minneapolis policeman in 2017. Plus, there was the irony of Dallas policemen being killed protecting Black Lives Matter protestors in 2016.

A rhetorical movement needs the prophets that takes an issue and transforms it into a vision that attracts people to the cause. The prophets convert the issues into causes.

**Lesson Three: The music.** As we pointed out, car and transistor radios made music portable in the 1960s at the very time large corporations were distributing music around the world. Music was a unifying, shared

experience. By 2017, the music industry is fractured. YouTube has over 98 million music subscribers,<sup>33</sup> who can select from 740 million music options. The No. 1 Top 40 station in the U.S.<sup>34</sup> attracted less than 5% of the audience in Los Angeles.<sup>35</sup> Satellite radio and music stored on portable devices means most people are creating their own Top 40s. If music was the voice of the prophets in the 1960s, then music is the choice of the individual in 2017. Members of a cause might share a song, but it is difficult to image a scenario where music unites the world.

By 1968 many factors came together to create a worldwide social movement. But the division of the entertainment world into huge numbers of small target audiences means that there may be many, many social movements composed of a small number of adherents living on social media and talking to each other through social media.

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- <sup>23</sup> Jefferson Airplane is known for its anti-war song "White Rabbit." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vl89g2SwMh4>
- <sup>24</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cuA15cMTJ7A>
- <sup>25</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JCOMeF6d1eU>
- <sup>26</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BGLGzRXY5Bw>
- <sup>27</sup> The Rolling Stones' first international hit was "I Can't Get No Satisfaction." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nrIPxIFzDi0>
- <sup>28</sup> Sale (1972, p. 445) reports 110 demonstrations on U.S. college campuses.
- <sup>29</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kEUX9k0npgA>
- <sup>30</sup> <https://www.archives.gov/files/press/exhibits/dream-speech.pdf>
- <sup>31</sup>
- <sup>32</sup> <http://www.berkeleydailyplanet.com/issue/2000-04-06/article/759>
- <sup>33</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-9-kyTW8ZkZNDHQJ6FgpwQ>
- <sup>34</sup> <https://www.thoughtco.com/top-top-pop-radio-stations-3246999>
- <sup>35</sup> <http://articles.latimes.com/2010/nov/02/entertainment/la-et-arbitrons-20101102>