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Youth Culture in Great Britain: The Effect of the Rapidly Growing Universities 1963-1968

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Youth Culture in Great Britain: The Effect of the Rapidly Growing Universities

1963-1968

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The 1960s were a decade of tremendous turbulence across multiple aspects of peoples lives throughout the world. There were wars, suppression of peoples and revolutions spanning many countries. Not only was this decade remembered for its power struggles, but for its influential cultural outburst which included musical, fashion and moral differences. The 'sixties' as it was remembered, was an eruption of change that had been prefaced for many years. With these numerous changes came the growth of several aspects of education for the people. In Great Britain, this growth of higher education would be an important factor for the youth culture of the sixties. There were numerous factors that led up to the great expansion of education in the sixties, including the 1944 Education Act for secondary education.[1] The focal point of this discussion, however, will be the ambitious 1963 Robbins Report of higher education which immensely impacted the expansion of universities. Though this report did not single-handedly change the course of Britain's education systems, it did help create the conversations and debates, like those between students, women and the generation of leaders in Britain at the time, that would arise with these rapidly growing universities.

By 1963 the Robbins Report played a role in the mass and rapid expansion of higher education in Britain. Before this report, higher education was minimal and provided opportunity for only 20,000 university students in all of Great Britain.[2] Higher education as it was, was restricted to certain fields, certain classes, and men. The change that came along with the Robbins Report not only helped open up the educational field to more subjects, but to more social classes and to women as well. A newly accessible education system gave young people a new chance to broaden their horizons in many ways. The growth of higher education in universities played an important role in Britain when it came to the expansion of youth cultures,

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[1] Peter Clarke, *Hope and Glory Britain 1900-1990* (London: Penguin Books, 1996), 283.
[2] Ibid, 287.

because it opened up the opportunity for youth to express their cultures and to have involvement in politics.

Youth culture was becoming a dominating factor in the lives of young people all over Britain during the '60s. Included in this cultural upheaval were a new and captivating music scene, sexual freedoms, drugs, influential fashion and a small yet noted protest culture. These aspects of youth culture in Britain were well remembered; however, the main issue that will be addressed here is the cross-culture of politics and youth tendencies, which is the engagement of youth in politics. This included the involvement of the members of new universities and their affiliates. The cross-culture between youth and politics stemmed from the influence of the flowing ideals coming out of the new universities and its students. The theory put forward for this paper is that the growth of higher education in Great Britain during the sixties, specifically from 1963 to 1968 was greatly impacted by the Robbins Report. It, or the changes enacted in its wake created opportunity for the students of new universities, which included women, by the broadening of more liberal studies. Through this, the ability of these peoples to express pop and counter youth cultures expanded creating a politicization within these cultures. The impact of this Report is so impressive though, because of the incredibly rapid rate at which new opportunity in higher education came *because* of this Report.

To find the link between the Robbins Report and youth cultures, sources pertaining to the report itself, debates on the report, responses to the report and statistics regarding the report were gathered. Further linking these two and the growing higher education in Britain, information on youth cultures, politics in youth cultures, and "voices" from the decade were sought out.[3] With the help of these numerous sources, this paper seeks to understand: 1) How did people react to

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[3] Arthur Marwick, "The Cultural Revolution of the Long Sixties: Voices of Reaction, Protest and Permeation," *The International History Review* 27, no. 4 (2005), https://www.jstor.org/stable/40109676.

this new expansion of higher education and who did it affect? 2) How did the new opportunity of higher education affect the young people's expression of opinion? 3) How did the young people implement their political ideals through pop culture, protest culture, and counter-culture? In answering each of these it is important to also understand certain issues, like women's freedoms, that arise within the aspects of these posed questions. While these are important issues to address, possibly the most important issue that arises is whether the growth of higher education would have happened without the Robbins Report. Answering the posed research questions, as well as addressing the issues that accompany this subject will aid in determining the main question: what role did the Robbins Report's play in the growth of higher education during 1963 onward and what was the Report's role in the change in universities and the political aspects of pop culture and counter-culture during the mid to late sixties? The further filtering of this subject will narrow down the issues that are to be understood which are: the differences this growth of higher education in Britain made in the universities and on university life, what groups of people were most impacted in a beneficial way, what aspects of education were most changed, what the report offered higher education and what effect this growth had on youth cultures in relation to political views.

Historiography

Many aspects of education and youth culture changed in Great Britain throughout the sixties. Seeing what historians have said about education and youth cultures separately is important, because being able to see if there are early correlations help show if historians have related their combined development. For this paper, I will be first looking at how historians view the impact of the Robbins Report in relation to higher education for universities, how historians

viewed youth cultures, and if historians discuss any correlation between the two. The first thing to be addressed is the Robbins Report and its impact as seen by historians.

In brief, the Robbins Report was a parliamentary report that summarized higher education in Great Britain and made a list of recommendations to expand higher education which included a wider access to higher education, a broader education, more detail teacher training, and new university planning. The system of higher education in Britain before the 1960s, according to Peter Clarke, was a "selective schooling system that had long been married to an even more selective university system, where likewise academic selection reinforced social discrimination."[4] Clarke discusses how the Robbins Report helped suppress this 'selective' education by giving a wider range of course options. Clarke also says that the biggest issue that the Committee faced about the Report is how it helped universities gain charters from the government, making it an incredibly expensive proposal.[5] Clarke's main point, however, when it comes to the Robbins Report, is the creation of a new range of options through the university that would be given. Clarke's view shows that he saw the Robbins Report as a *cause*; however, Harold Perkin saw the Report as a *result* of the expansion of higher education. Perkin explicitly states that the report was "the result rather than the cause of expansion."[6] He goes on to address how the Report only confirmed what was already being addressed to happen by "the University Grant Committee" which was a foreseen expansion.[7] This idea of the Report being a result is also seen by H. A. Rée who said, "several years before the Robbins Report recommended an explosive increase in the number of places in British universities the University Grant

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[4] Clarke, *Hope and Glory*, 287.
[5] Ibid, 288.
[6] Harold Perkin, "University Planning in Britain in the 1960s." Higher Education 1, no. 1 (1972): 111, https://www.jstor.org/stable/3445962.
[7] Ibid.

Committee had 'willed the means' for seven new universities to be established in England."[8]

While Rée and Perkin view the Report as a result, Sir Claus Moser, like Peter Clarke, saw the

Report as a cause. Moser claims that "His (Lord Robbins) decision changed the course of higher

education." [9] Lord Robbins decision being the provisions that will be discussed while reviewing

information pertaining to the Robbins Report. While there are opposing views on whether the

Robbins report was a cause or result, these historians all conclude that the expansion of the

higher education system helped widen the range of degrees as well as the induction of, as Perkin

had put it "fresh thinking."[10] The opinions of these historians on the stance of the Report sum up

well the two options a person can choose from (a result or a cause) when thinking positively

about the report, in which positivity means that the Report impacted for good regardless. The

Robbins Report impacted education positively and resulted in this mass expansion of higher

education, and without the approval of the Report, the expansion would not have happened so

rapidly. Before addressing this statement, I will move on to the historiographical aspect of youth

culture and the cross between politics.

Youth culture came in many forms in Britain during the sixties and it was in the new

universities that it thrived. In David Fowlers *Youth Culture in Modern Britain,* he says that the

central argument of his book is how the "university students are the only group who could have

generated a cohesive youth culture in Britain… British students of the 1960s were not that

interested in youth culture."[11] While I agree that the university students were the group who

helped and "generated a cohesive youth culture," the university students and their involvement of

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[8] H. A. Rée, "The New Universities in Britain," *Comparative Education Review* 8, no. 1 (1964): 94, https://www.jstor.org/stable/1186478.

[9] Sir Claus Moser, "The Robbins Report 25 Years After – and the future of the universities," *Oxford Review of Education* 14, issue 1 (1988): 5, https://doi.org/10.1080/0305498880140102.

[10] Perkin, "University Planning," 111.

[11] David Fowler, *Youth Culture in Modern Britain, c. 1920- c. 1970 From Ivory Tower to Global Movement - A New History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 167.

politics was a whole part of youth culture and that culture was furthered by university expansion.

Fowler's claim acts as a counter-argument to mine, and to other historians who also claim to see

a clear correlation and involvement between youth cultures and politics. Works like that of

Timothy Scott Brown's "The Sixties in the City", expresses this correlation between youth

politics and counter-culture. In introducing his article, he says "examining how these dovetailed

with the activist conceptions of artistic-political avant-gardes and the counterculture with which

they were linked." [12] In his work, he discusses the anarchist ideas of the youth and the Marxist-

Leninist movements.

    Movements such as the Marxist-Leninist helped the youth develop into the direction of

political engagement. Many of the historians who discuss the politics of youth culture talk about

the influence of Communist ideals. Other influences took the shape of different political parties

like those as expressed by youth music cultures. In "Are the Kids United?" Evan Smith talks of

1970's youth movements in Britain by having said, "Rock Against Racism was able to engage

with the emerging youth cultures of punk and reggae, and how this interaction with youth culture

helped to create an antiracist consciousness informed by the politics of the SWP." [13]

Communism and racism were just two key issues being discussed in the seventies as well as the

sixties, along with gender equality and gay rights. While Smith is talking about the '70s in his

quote, he shows a correlation between youth music culture and politics, which he further

explains by giving background about these movements which started in the late 1960s. He also

notes that Martin Jacques of the Communist Party of Great Britain gave three reasons for the

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[12] Timothy Scott Brown, "The Sixties in the City: Avant-gardes and Urban Rebels in New York, London and West Berlin," *Journal of Social History* 6, no. 4 (2013): 817, https://muse.jhu.edu/article/509997.
[13] Evan Smith, "Are the Kids United?: The Communist Party of Great Britain, Rock Against Racism, and the Politics of Youth Culture," *Journal for the Study of Radicalism* 5, no. 2 (2001): 86, http://muse.jhu.edu/article/465448.

growth of youth culture in which he included, "the expansion and greater accessibility to higher education."[14] Further analysis of this complete cross between the growth of higher education, youth culture and politics can give a better understanding of the importance of accepting politics as a part of youth culture, as well as accepting the youth as having viable opinions through multiple ways of expression. However, what should first be understood of this importance is an understanding of the Robbins Report.

The Robbins Report

The formal name for the Robbins Report is the "Committee on Higher Education, Higher Education Report of the Committee appointed by the Prime Minister under the Chairmanship of Lord Robbins 1961-63."[15] Essentially, the Robbins Report discussed the state of higher education and included the main proposals of how to better expand higher education which included: wider access to higher education, more broad education, better teacher training, and new university planning. The title mentions chairman Lionel Charles Robbins (1898-1984), who spearheaded the "second golden age of British economics."[16] Robbins was a student of the London School of Economics and Political Science, and sometime after his three-year education, he held a chair there, which he gave up in 1961 to become the Chairman of the Financial Times.[17] His involvement in the Report was important and "apparent" in his "natural egalitarianism, and his opposition to privilege, especially in education," including viewing

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[14] Ibid, 93.
[15] U.K. Parliament Papers. Command Papers, Committee on Higher Education, Higher Education, Report of the committee appointed by the Prime Minister under the chairmanship of Lord Robbins, 1961-1963. ProQuest LLC, 639.
[16] D. P. O'Brien, "Lionel Charles Robbins, 1989-1984," *The Economic Journal* 98, no. 389 (1988): 104, https://www.jstor.org/stable/2233513.
[17] Ibid, 119.

educational change as a change for the better.[18] Robbins had open eyes about the educational

growth that he assisted in putting forward and justified this report with the idea that it was the

importance and romanticism about the "role of education and the good it could do in the world,"

according to Lionel Charles Robbins bibliography author D. P. O'Brien.[19] With this change for

British universities came major financial, student, staff, grade, qualification, and content of

course change.[20] However, the main focal point for the use of the Robbins Report in this paper is

the student growth and course content. The Robbins Report, as expressed by A. H. Halsey was "a

landmark in the definition of higher education."[21] Before the addition of new universities in the

nineteenth century, England and Whales had two universities for 500 years. In 1962:

> there were 31 British universities, 10 colleges of advanced technology, 150 teacher-
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> training colleges and upwards of 600 technological colleges and other institutions of
>
> further education in which about 33,000 students were enrolled on courses of higher
>
> education standard. Robbins set targets for 1973 of 219,000 university students, 122,000
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> teacher-trainees in (renamed colleges) of education, and 51,000 in technological colleges
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> on advanced courses.[22]

The advances for higher education in Britain seemed farfetched. Educational change that came

directly after the war even, which grew dramatically, but not in comparison to that of the growth

brought upon by the Robbins Report. Since 1900, the percentage of youth entering full-time

education and universities well surpassed doubling, but at a slow pace.[23] The focus of this chart,

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[18] Ibid, 120.
[19] Ibid.
[20] U.K. Parliament Papers, Command Papers, Committee on Higher Education.
[21] A.H. Halsey, *British Social Trends since 1900*, (Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press, 1988), 268.
[22] Ibid, 271.
[23] Appendix A

as seen in the green column of Appendix A, is the percentage of various age groups entering the

university for full-time education and the total number of various age groups entering *all* full-

time higher education.[24] The aim of the Robbins Report was to take the low numbers mentioned

above from Halsey's work, as recorded in 1962 and raise it considerably by 1973, a goal which

was reached early in 1970.[25] However, the Robbins Reports expanse did not stop at the number

of students, but continued with the expansion of course options. In the multiple university types

or higher education facilities, there was a contrast in the fields of science and technology and

"other subjects," such as business studies and economics.[26] The idea of this contrast was the

thought that science and technology would grow with new universities, but instead "other

subjects" succeeded the Reports expectations.[27]

     With the number of students rapidly growing in the universities and the fields of studies

expanding came the opinions of many, including those of the generation who were before the

youth of the sixties. The opinions and debates, like those between the previous generation and

the youth of the time during the growth of universities, and internally between parliament

members during the passing of the Report, were not only outside of the political realm when it

came to the Robbins Report. Within parliament, there were debates on the impact of the Robbins

Report on education, which included members needing reassurance about the Robbins Report

and the many facets it addressed[28] To continue with the idea of reassurance within parliament,

statements were made between parliament members on what could have been a "crash" in

education because of the mass proposal, which was a noble move by Lord Robbins.[29] These

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[24] Halsey, *British Social*, 295.
[25] Ibid, 271.
[26] Ibid, 277.
[27] Appendix B
[28] HC Deb 15 December 1966 vol. 738 cc648-9
[29] HL Deb 01 December 1965 vol. 270 cc1280-370

internal parliamentary debates went on throughout the sixties between 1963-1968 and further.

The conflict of the Robbins Report within the governing generation was continued by the

"Robbins Era" of older involved citizens, for example by members of the Birmingham Section

Graduate Committee. In their address of the Robbins Report, these committee members disagree

with the report because of the "suggestion" of the shortage of technologists and scientists.[30] The

Robbins Report, in fact, aimed predicted statistics to see a growth in these fields, but instead, the

fleeting numbers of students in these fields caused strife amongst this group. In 1964 this

committee, after proposing how to better develop education for these subject majors said, "this

ability, we feel, is going to benefit most production engineering students…"[31] The group here are

showing a large problem that equates to the whole of the sixties, which is the previous generation

wanting to revert back to the older ways rather than look ahead to what the future holds. In their

address, it is also stated how the "unbalanced flow of graduates from the Arts and Science

faculties only serve to emphasize the problems of ad hoc selection by the student," in which the

committee proposing suggests some sort of control.[32] The discussion of the Robbins Report

didn't end with the older generation who did not want to expand education to be more inclusive

to other subjects, but continued through popular sources like the London Times. In one article,

Britain was said to have been in a crisis of higher education which would be helped by the

approach of the Robbins Report.[33] There was a fear expressed in this article that when the report

was enacted, that the act would disappear and not live up to its potential.[34] The debates and what

people had to say didn't stop the effect of the Robbins Report. This being said, could the new

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[30] J. Ryan and D. Evans, "Some Observations on the Robbins Report," Production Engineer 43, no. 9 (1964): 470.
[31] Ibid, 470.
[32] Ibid, 471.
[33] "Robbins Report in October: M.P.'s Look at Major Issues to be Discussed," 18 July 1963.
[34] Ibid.

universities and the expansion of education that will next be discussed have happened without this report? The answer is yes; this expansion would have happened without the Robbins Report. The impact of the Robbins Report was widespread. It opened up fields of study and opened up higher education to more people which impacted the students of new universities. Many of these students would become a core part of British youth political culture.

The New University: Women and Curriculum

Many changes came for new universities as a result of the impact of the Robbins Report. Part of this change included finding who the new university was most beneficial to and what aspects of higher education changed to affect youth culture the most. Between the new opportunity for multiple civil classes and races, was the new opportunity presented to women by the growing universities that the Robbins Report helped stem.

The young women of Britain were gaining much more access to new universities which made them capable of more involvement for social movements. Before the sixties and the Robbins Report, few women attended university. Lord Robbins claimed that "a large pool of talent was being denied entry to universities," when talking about women and their rights to be students.[35] During the time of the reports of the Robbins committee, less than a quarter of the five percent of British youth in universities were women.[36] These statistics show just how lacking not only the enrollment of higher education in Britain was, but the lack of diversity among genders. At this point, women had their own separate universities that were branches of the main universities, like Oxford and Cambridge. Women having their own place of study may

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[35] Nancy Weiss Malkiel, *'Keep the Damned Women Out.' The Struggle for Coeducation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016): 492.
[36] Ibid, 491.

have sounded impressive to some, but it was not the quality of the institutions that were lacking. The universities did offer equal opportunity and according to Nancy Malkiel:

> Although the women colleges had ample measures of prestige and distinction, they lacked capacity and resources to educate large numbers of students. As a result, the number of women at Cambridge and Oxford were small. In 1963-1964, women accounted for 16 percent of Oxford students, compared with the 18 percent of students in British universities as a whole.[37]

The separation of women from attending the same university as men is incomprehensible to us today. The fear at the time, as Malkiel says, was that women would "feminize, even overrun" universities of men.

Fearing women in a place of education not only suppresses the ability of women to gain equal education, but it also changes the social and cultural environments around both men and women. Young men in universities also made it known that the idea of all-male institutions was not appealing, by dodging universities like Oxford, and attending the few already co-educational schools. Out of this frustration caused by lack of diversity in the university came many great first-hand accounts. An incredible example of a young woman living university life during the sixties of new universities is Shelia Rowbotham, who is an example for women in universities and youth in politics and culture. On her experience as a woman in university Rowbotham said:

> The first few days at St. Hilda's felt like a tape rewinding. At Oxford the fifties had been preserved and in a women's college I was enclosed once again in an institution which returned me to the claustrophobia of Hunmandy. Certainly here you had your own room

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[37] Ibid, 494.

and the teachers were called dons, but you were still shut in at night, not free to come and

go as you pleased.[38]

Rowbotham's account took place in October of 1961. Here she is referring to St. Hilda, a branch

of Oxford University which was an all-female institution. She refers to the beginning of her

university life as claustrophobic and restrictive, as one could imagine many of the few women

who attended university would. This restriction of women would slowly be lifted throughout the

'60s and into the '70s and onward for universities to be co-educational. The addition of women

in the university system also helped bring to light liberation of other rights, such as gay rights,

spearheaded by British youth. With the gradual addition of women in the university systems and

the change attached to them, also came the second important aspect of change pushed forward by

the Robbins Report; a broader curriculum. This aspect of change relates to the cross between

youth culture and education in that the "other subjects," like those previously discussed using

information by A. H. Halsey helped expand aspects of youth culture like art.[39] In the chart, as

seen in Appendix B in the green shaded row, "other subjects" are growing in comparison to

science and technology, showing a change and shift in the new universities courses.

The way of the new universities helped expand new curriculum and course options for

the students. The new options that were available to the young people who were enrolled gave

more opportunity not only in what subject was being learned, but also in what style of learning

was taking place. Malkiel addresses these new options for university students and says:

The new universities offered broader, more flexible, more interdisciplinary, more

innovative curricula. Committed to avoiding excessive specialization, they also sought to

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[38] Sheila Rowbotham, *Promise of a Dream* (New York: Verso, 2001): 43.
[39] Appendix B

provide opportunities for students to pursue studies in multiple fields rather than having

to choose a single academic focus as in the older, more traditional universities. And they

emphasized new styles of learning – inquiry-based learning, enterprise-related learning,

learning based in interdisciplinary schools rather than departments. [40]

This quote from Malkiel, as well as the information from Halsey, shows that the new universities

curriculum and ways of learning start to change as a result of the Robbins Report. The Report

mentions much of this wanted change in Chapter VIII, "University Courses," where the

committee expresses not only the advances in science and technologies, but the "division of

courses required to study."[41] Students were not only getting an education that would incorporate

them with each other (men and women), but one that would advance them intellectually in

multiple areas. The impact that the Robbins Report had, that on new universities for women and

new subjects for university students, didn't stop here. The new universities in the mid-sixties and

onward, affected by women and expansion of curriculum and learning, made an impact on the

youth of university life and cultures.

The expansion and new diversity of students and curriculum allowed students to further,

during this time more so than before, express themselves through different youth cultures. The

diversity between people helped create a mix of ideas between students, for example, the rights

women were fighting for to possibly reach more men and the new curriculum which helped

usher in more modern subject and technique. It was important for these changes among students,

which were an effect of the Robbins Report because this helped further mold youth pop culture

and youth counter-culture of the time. Their lives were being diversified with the changing,

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[40] Malkiel, *Keep the Damned*, 495.
[41] U.K. Parliament Papers. Command Papers, Committee on Higher Education, 741.

youth-impacted university worlds around them, and within the university, the diversities of opinion and being able to speak about personal ideals was coming about.

Introducing the Youth: Pop and Counter-Culture

Pop culture and counter-culture are familiar terms discussed when addressing the 1960's. This decade is notorious for having movements that helped civil and human rights, and influential upheavals of popular scenes such as music and fashion. The new universities which "injected fresh thinking into the university system," as Harold Perkin says in his article, expanded to include seven newly built universities all placed within two hours of London, including the university in Warwick, as well as learning institutions who were now dubbed 'universities'.[42] The new universities opened up many doors for male and now female students. Other than new admittance and curriculum being given by these universities, the mixture of both sexes to university life was becoming more appealing to enrolling students. The upheaval of a growing sexual counter-culture amongst university students was, without it being the intention of the Report, helpfully moved along by the Robbins Report impact on growing universities. Looking back to Sheila Rowbotham's account on life as a woman segregated from men during this new university era, one can see that the new co-education impacted men and woman by more than just broadening the curriculum. Women and men were entering into the freedom of the mid-sixties which included being active in a new sexual culture.

Rowbotham recounts taking "trips round male colleges" and seeing that there were a lot of men there. She included her opinion on how it would still be hard to find one she could "fancy."[43] She also mentions how at St. Hilda, the branch of Oxford she attended that was all-

[42] Perkin, "University Planning," 118.
[43] Rowbotham, *Promise of*, 46.

female, there was a speaker who noted that "sex should be confined to the act of reproduction," raising heavy criticism from some students who already felt confined.[44] Examples from all-female schools, like the one Rowbotham attended, show how young women can easily become frustrated with the many restrictions being placed upon them by their university structure. With the changing balance of the sexes enrolled at the university, would come the freedom for women, and men, to express themselves with each other. It was this restriction though, one of many, that helped expression of opinion become more prominent and political in British youth culture. Looking at this aspect of the sixties counter-culture literally helped define the youth, as *Sixties People* authors Jane and Michael Stern said, "it was a time when it was possible to walk down any street and tell just by looking at someone where he or she stood politically, sexually, and philosophically."[45] These were the beginnings of the cross between counter-culture, pop culture and youth political expression. Continuing the venture of the relationship of this cross brings one to look at youth pop culture of the decade, post-Robbins Report publication.

The definitive process of creating music of multiple genres that captivated an entire generation was iconic. The sixties youth who heard popular music, like the Beatles, fashioned who they were themselves after these musicians. Not only was music coming through to new university students and young people, but it was coming *out* of these new universities. Simon Frith, a former rock critic said that "in Britain, the very emergence of a specific British rock music would have been impossible without the subsidized spaces, resources and audiences provided by art schools and the college circuit."[46] Music was one the of the most defining aspects of British youth culture during the sixties because it was so influential in many ways.

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[44] Ibid, 50.
[45] Jane Stern and Michael Stern, *Sixties People*, (New York, Alfred A. Knope Inc., 1990): 5.
[46] Tony Bennett, Simon Frith, Lawrence Grossberg, John Shepherd, and Graeme Turner eds. *Rock and Popular Music Politics, Policies, Institutions*, (London, Routledge, 1993): 9.

Style and opinion flowed through the popular music culture of Britain, one genre of this music which was rock.

Heavily influenced by the rock scene were the Mods and Rockers "gangs" of youth culture. These rivals were incredibly crucial in being, as told by James Perone a music scholar, "a metaphor for the development of British invasions rock,' a proxy for the cultural tensions of which, in five years spanning 1959 to 1964, a revolution in musical cultural styles emerged on the British music scene."[47] The Mods and Rockers show a more extreme (even revolutionary) example of the impact that music had on the young people of Britain in the sixties. There is, however, a distinction between the rumbling youth and the politically influenced. The relationship that music shares with youth, students and new universities is the rich culture that was being built from the ability to express opinion. Popular culture music can relate back to universities, women, men, freedom of expressions like the sexual upheaval in universities, and politics.

It is important to talk about counter-culture and the cross of it in university life to show that; yes, there *was* in fact a mixture of these two 'worlds' (inducing pop culture and political ideals). The young people in Britain didn't have to, as many make it seem, choose between university and culture. It was the mix of these cultures and the new universities that made the youth who they were and the culture they adapted.

The Youth Politicized

The youth of Britain during the 1960s were in the midst of a culture that was politically influenced. New universities, pop culture and counter-culture all played their role in the youth

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[47] Grzegorz Kosc, Clara Juncker, Sharon Monteith, and Britta Waldschmidt-Nelson, eds, *The Transatlantic Sixties: Europe and the United States in the Counterculture Decade*, (Transcript Verlag, 2013): 123.

culture that was influenced by a political opinion by the activism of the young people. The youth took into account political parties (what was learned by them through expanding universities), lived their young lives holding onto political beliefs and expressed political beliefs through youth culture. The youth implemented their rights as political idealist in engaging in party conversation, protests and activism. All of these aspects which were effect by youth cultures helped the young people of Britain become 'the youth,' and with the help of 'new universities,' gave them a voice.

The politicization of youth culture was just as much of an important part of the sixties for the young people as any other aspect. The young people who were now growing with the universities in culture and freedoms were also wanting to have the ability to take part in the changes. The Robbins Report helped push these new connections. Many of the young people who were a part of these new universities grew in their knowledge of politics and how they related to themselves, by attending these universities. As Rowbotham recalled, "then Judith asked me about politics. Politics! I had been so intent on my beat reflection on the human condition that I barely considered politics. Politics as I understood them took place in a removed terrain of elections and parties."[48] She goes on to tell of her growing political opinion in resonance with the communist party ideals, which were very popular among British youth. Many members of the political parties popular to the young people, those like the Communist Party of Great Britain and the Young Communist League (YCL), had changing ideals that morphed with the growing universities and transformative youth cultures.[49] Evan Smith, author of "Are the Kids United?" tells in his piece that:

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[48] Rowbotham, *Promise of*, 44.
[49] Smith, "Are the Kids," 92.

The composition of the YCL membership was changing, with a greater enthusiasm for popular youth culture and identity-based politics. A large number of the young members who had begun joining the Party in the late 1960s had been radicalized by the student activist and feminist movements…[50]

The young people were not only facing in the direction of one political issue, but branched out toward popular and cultural issues that affected more than just themselves. Smith goes on to say that, "this explosion of youth culture led a 'massive revolt by the youth generation,' with some inside the YCL attempting to 'develop a politicized relationship with youth culture."[51] The young people of Great Britain understood that the development of their culture was not only the development of the university system, pop culture, and counter-culture, but of political ideals that catapulted them into the same civil status as the 'adults.' An example of this projection of youth into a new light is Birmingham in 1968. In '68 amidst the global revolution was the Birmingham youths appeal for the Birmingham Youth Parliament which had 55 seats.[52] Reverend David Collyer who was the chairman for the movement said, "when I was in Germany I met the student leaders at the heart of the troubles…my feeling was what they were really complaining about was that they had no voice in the community…"[53] The idea behind this parliament of the youth was to introduce the youth to "civic affairs" before a new voting age.[54] The impact of youth parliament is still seen to this day in the United Kingdom. The new universities helped students all over Great Britain find their voice by foremost giving more youth the opportunity to attend a place of higher education. Further, these universities offered an

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[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid, 93.
[52] "Youth Goes to the Polls with Banners Waving," 16 Sep 1968: 2.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.

expansion of and more modern curriculum, which gave students the opportunity to take the modern education they were receiving and go into the ever-changing and highly opinionated diverse world of the sixties. This 'new' world thrived through the perseverance for change brought about by the students and youth of new universities in Britain.

Conclusion

Through the evidence of the Robbins Report, new universities, pop culture, counter-culture, and youth politics, it clear that there was, in fact, a correlation between the growth of higher education and youth cultures. This shows specifically that, though not in every aspect (as with Mods and Rockers), youth cultures of the sixties were often political. Many factors contributed to this politicization of youth cultures. There were those factors included within the Report, universities and youth cultures, and others were the expansion of freedom for women and men, sexual culture and how politics were perceived by the youth in Britain. Youth culture is remembered as "sex, drugs, and rock' n' roll," but it was much more than that. The young people of youth cultures in Great Britain took their stride through politics to become a visible group of citizens.

Many people who have studied these youth cultures also make a connection of the cultures having political ideals. One main point of this paper is to agree with these historians in saying that, yes, there were political ideals within youth cultures. There are a few historians who stand by the thought that there was no correlation, but the ones who take note of this cross between youth culture and politics make the most impact on this work. The idea that the youth 'revolution' in Britain was at the minimum level is true, because the word 'revolution' should be left to the youth who were taking their literal freedom into their own hands. This does not invalidate the youth culture and movements of Great Britain; however, for the British youth at

the center of this discussion, many historians did consider the politics of youth culture a 'movement.' This is a deserving title since this was a 'movement' and not a revolt that helped mobilize youth to make a stand to be a viable and educated group. The important aspect of these movements of British youth by pop and counter-culture are how, with this new found growing university system, the explosion of politic ideals through the university helped students strive for actual political involvement, like in Birmingham. This can relate to the struggle of modern day youths and political activism.

There has been a revival in the activist spirit as seen today by the youth culture around the world. As this paper has shown, higher education has historically had a powerful impact on the views of young people and their cultures and the acceptance of younger generations as having viable opinions when it comes to politics. Today, not only are the students of universities involved in politics, but people younger than the voting age are voicing their opinion. All around, especially in what can be seen as the political crisis in America, young people are advocating for the spirit of the youth to remain a prominent voice in politics. Higher education, its rapid reform and the explosion of youth culture can be seen echoing from the spirit of the youth of the sixties to the youth living through political ideals of the modern day, not only in Britain but around the world.

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Appendix A

Year	University	Teacher Training	Further Education	All Full-Time Higher Education
1900	0.8	0.4	-	1.2
1924	1.5	1.0	0.2	2.7
1938	1.7	0.7	0.3	2.7
1954	3.2	2.0	0.6	5.8
1955	3.4	2.0	0.7	6.1
1956	3.5	2.1	0.8	6.4
1957	3.9	2.2	0.9	7.0
1958	4.1	2.4	1.2	7.7
1959	4.2	2.8	1.3	8.3
1960	4.1	2.7	1.5	8.3
1961	4.1	2.5	1.7	8.3
1962	4.0	2.5	2.0	8.5

"Percentage of age group entering full-time higher education, 1900-1963, Great Britain."

*The focus of the chart is the green shaded areas. "University," refers to the percent of the group, of no certain age, who have entered higher education. This chart shows that a gradual growth leading up to the implementation of the Robbins Report.

A.H. Halsey, *British Social Trends since 1900*, (Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press, 1988), 270.

Appendix B

Students	USG Institutions		'Public Sector' Institutions		Totals All Institutions		Grand Total All Institutions All Subjects
	Science/ Technology	Other Subjects	Science/ Technology	Other Subjects	Science/ Technology	Other Subjects	
(1) Actual 1962	59	71	26	60	85	131	216
(2)Addition to 1980 proposed by Robbins Committee	136	80	38	88	174	168	342
(3)Robbins proposal for 1980 ((1)+(2))	195	151	64	148	259	299	558
(4) Actual 1980	112	188	64	160	176	348	524
(5) Difference between programme and performance	-83	+37	nil	+12	-83	+49	-34

"Science/Technology contrasted with all other subjects, Great Britain (000s full-time students)."

*The focus of the chart is the green shaded areas.

A.H. Halsey, *British Social Trends since 1900*, (Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press, 1988), 276.