

## Archive: Echo of 1968 in student walkouts

This letter originally ran in Newsday on March 7, 1968 in the "Teen Letters" column. It was submitted by Jeffrey A. Schechtman, 17, and is this week's #ThrowbackThursday in The Point.



This March 1968 photo provided by the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center shows protesters during the Theodore Roosevelt High School walkout. Photo Credit: AP / Devra Weber

March 15, 2018 4:04 PM, Amanda Fiscina

*This letter originally ran in Newsday on March 7, 1968 in the "Teen Letters" column. It was submitted by Jeffrey A. Schechtman, 17, and is this week's #ThrowbackThursday in The Point.*

Today we young people are standing before the judgment of history, trying to make our contribution to the world in which we live. At the same time, an air of disengagement and disinterest hangs over the most educated and affluent generation the world has ever known. Our peers feel dwarfed and dominated by the towering bureaucracies in which they spend their lives; they feel helpless and begin to conclude that they cannot cope. Then our generation itself becomes sick.

Ours in a nation with great ability and incredible power. But it seems to have so limited youth's chance to enact change that today's youth protest without a program and appear to be rebels without a cause. Lacking a program that does not comprise specific solutions, these young people can only drop out of a society they can't accept and attack an establishment they fear to challenge.

---

---

## Teen Letters

### Judgment of History

Today we young people are standing before the judgment of history, trying to make our contribution to the world in which we live. At the same time, an air of disengagement and disinterest hangs over the most educated and affluent generation the world has ever known. Our peers feel dwarfed and dominated by the towering bureaucracies in which they spend their lives; they feel helpless and begin to conclude that they cannot cope. Then our generation itself becomes sick.

Ours is a nation with great ability and incredible power. But it seems to have so limited youth's chance to enact change that today's youths protest without a program and appear to be rebels without a cause. Lacking a program that does not comprise specific solutions, these young people can only drop out of a society they can't accept and attack an establishment they fear to challenge.

In order for youth to play a part in effecting public policy, they must involve themselves in the total political process. And they must do it not in terms of SDS or ADA or YAF, but through the two major parties, which have the ability to change America. Young people must train themselves in the techniques of political action, rather than political passivism. They must master the techniques by which our candidates are nominated and elected. Then they must choose the party that is most at home with their philosophy. Only then, in unity with all young America, can a lasting, significant and responsible contribution be made to the programs, progress and prosperity of our nation.

—Jeffrey A. Schechtman, 17

Thursday, March 7, 1968

This letter originally ran in Newsday on March 7, 1968 in the "Teen Letters" column. Photo Credit: Newsday Archive

In order for youth to play a part in effecting public policy, they must involve themselves in the total political process. And they must do it not in terms of SDS or ADA or YAF, but through the two major parties, which have the ability to change America. Young people must train themselves in the techniques of political action, rather than political passivism. They must master the techniques by which our candidates are nominated and elected. Then they must choose the party that is most at home with their philosophy. Only then, in unity with all young, can a lasting, significant and responsible contribution be made to the programs, progress and prosperity of our nation.