CHAPTER 38
The Stormy Sixties, 1960–1968

PART I: REVIEWING THE CHAPTER

A. Checklist of Learning Objectives
After mastering this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Describe the high expectations stirred by Kennedy’s New Frontier and his limited success in achieving his domestic objectives.

2. Analyze the theory of Kennedy’s doctrine of flexible response to communist challenges around the world and its dangerous application in Vietnam.


4. Discuss the course of the black movement of the 1960s, from civil rights to Black Power.

5. Outline the steps by which Johnson led the United States deeper into the Vietnam quagmire.

6. Explain how the Vietnam War brought turmoil to American society and eventually drove Johnson and the divided Democrats from power in 1968.

7. Describe the youthful cultural rebellions of the 1960s in the United States and around the world, and indicate which of their features quickly faded and which endured.

B. Glossary
To build your social science vocabulary, familiarize yourself with the following terms.

1. free world During the Cold War, the noncommunist democracies of the Western world, as opposed to the communist states. “But to the free world the ‘Wall of Shame’ looked like a gigantic enclosure around a concentration camp.”

2. nuclear proliferation The spreading of nuclear weapons to nations that have not previously had them. “Despite the perils of nuclear proliferation or Soviet domination, de Gaulle demanded an independent Europe.”

3. exile A person who has been banished or driven from her or his country by the authorities. “He had inherited... a CIA-backed scheme to topple Fidel Castro from power by invading Cuba with anticomunist exiles.”

4. peaceful coexistence The principle or policy that communists and noncommunists—specifically, the United States and the Soviet Union—ought to live together without trying to dominate or destroy each other. “Kennedy thus tried to lay the foundations for a realistic policy of peaceful coexistence with the Soviet Union.”

5. détente In international affairs, a period of relaxed agreement in areas of mutual interest. “Here were the modest origins of the policy that later came to be known as ‘détente.’”

6. sit-in A demonstration in which people occupy a facility for a sustained period to achieve political or economic goals. “Following the wave of sit-ins that surged across the South...”

7. establishment The ruling inner circle of a nation and its principal institutions. “Goldwater’s forces had... rid[den] roughshod over the moderate Republican ‘eastern establishment.’”
8. **literacy test** A literacy examination that a person must pass before being allowed to vote. “Ballot-denying devices like the poll tax, literacy tests, and barefaced discrimination still barred black people from the political process.”

9. **ghetto** The district of a city where members of a religious or racial minority are forced to live, either by legal restriction or by informal social pressure. (Originally, ghettos were enclosed Jewish districts in Europe.) “…a bloody riot exploded in Watts, a black ghetto in Los Angeles.”

10. **black separatism** The doctrine that blacks in the United States ought to separate themselves from whites, either in separate institutions or in a separate political territory. “…Malcolm X trumpeted black separatism…”

11. **hawk** During the Vietnam War, someone who favored vigorous prosecution or escalation of the conflict. “If the United States were to cut and run from Vietnam, claimed prowar ‘hawks,’ other nations would doubt America’s word…”

12. **dove** During the Vietnam War, someone who opposed the war and favored de-escalation or withdrawal by the United States. “New flocks of antiwar ‘doves’ were hatching daily.”

13. **militant** In politics, someone who pursues political goals in a belligerent way, often using paramilitary means. “Other militants…shouted obscenities…”

14. **dissident** Someone who dissents, especially from an established or normative institution or position. “…Spiro T. Agnew [was] noted for his tough stands against dissidents and black militants.”

15. **coattails** In politics, the ability of a popular candidate at the top of a ticket to transfer some of his or her support to lesser candidates on the same ticket. “Nixon was… the first president-elect since 1848 not to bring in on his coattails at least one house of Congress…”

**PART II: CHECKING YOUR PROGRESS**

**A. True-False**

Where the statement is true, circle T; where it is false, circle F.

1. T F Kennedy’s pledge to land a man on the moon by the end of the 1960s was primarily an attempt to restore America’s damaged prestige in the missile-and-space race with the Soviet Union.

2. T F The Kennedy doctrine of flexible response was applied primarily to the effort to contain potential Soviet expansion into central and western Europe.

3. T F The successful U.S.-supported coup against the corrupt Diem regime in South Vietnam enabled a more democratic South Vietnamese government to take a stronger role in defeating the Communist Viet Cong.

4. T F Kennedy financed and trained the Cuban rebels involved in the Bay of Pigs invasion, but refused to intervene directly with American troops or planes when their invasion failed.

5. T F The Soviets’ humiliation in the Cuban missile crisis resulted in Khrushchev’s ouster and a new round of military competition between the United States and the Soviet Union.

6. T F Even after Martin Luther King’s civil rights demonstrators were viciously attacked in Birmingham in 1963, President Kennedy stayed aloof and urged restraint and caution by African American leaders.

7. T F Johnson passed his major Great Society legislation like Medicare and Medicaid only by compromising with Republicans and conservative southern Democrats in Congress.

8. T F The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution authorized the president to respond to naval attacks but kept the power to make war in Vietnam firmly in the hands of Congress.

9. T F Johnson’s Great Society immigration reforms ended the discriminatory quotas in place since the 1920s and opened America’s doors to millions of immigrants from Asia and Latin America.
10. T F The culmination of the nonviolent civil rights movement was the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

11. T F The urban riots of the late 1960s demonstrated that the South had vehemently resisted the civil rights movement’s efforts to integrate southern schools and neighborhoods.

12. T F The insurgent antiwar campaigns of Senators Eugene McCarthy and Robert Kennedy forced Johnson to withdraw as a presidential candidate and de-escalate the Vietnam War.

13. T F The bitter Democratic divisions over Vietnam enabled Richard Nixon to win the presidency with a minority of popular votes and no clear policy mandate.

14. T F The youth rebellion of the 1960s and the political crisis of 1968 were caused by the unique events and conditions in the United States at that time.

15. T F One major American institution largely unaffected by the cultural upheaval of the 1960s was the conservative Roman Catholic Church.

B. Multiple Choice

Select the best answer and circle the corresponding letter.

1. President Kennedy’s New Frontier proposals for increased federal educational aid and medical assistance to the elderly
   a. succeeded because of his skill in legislative bargaining.
   b. were traded away in exchange for passage of the bill establishing the Peace Corps.
   c. were stalled by strong opposition in Congress from Republicans and southern Democrats.
   d. were strongly opposed by business interests.
   e. were essentially abandoned because of Kennedy’s concentration on foreign policy.

2. The industry that engaged in a bitter conflict with President Kennedy over price increases was the
   a. airline industry.
   b. health care industry.
   c. steel industry.
   d. oil industry.
   e. banking industry.

3. The fundamental strategic and military policy pursued by the Kennedy administration was to
   a. develop a flexible response to fighting brushfire wars in the Third World.
   b. threaten massive nuclear retaliation against any communist advances.
   c. build up heavy conventional armed forces in Western Europe against the threat of a Soviet invasion.
   d. provide military assistance to client states in the Third World so that they could fight proxy wars without the need of American forces.
   e. arm and train rebels to overthrow the Soviet puppet regimes in Eastern Europe.

4. The Kennedy administration suffered a major foreign policy disaster when
   a. Middle East governments sharply raised the price of imported oil.
   b. American-backed Cuban rebels were defeated by Castro’s Cuban army at the Bay of Pigs.
   c. Khrushchev forced the United States to remove its missiles from Turkey during the Cuban missile crisis.
   d. American Green Beret guerrilla forces began suffering heavy casualties in the jungles of Vietnam.
   e. Britain and France both withdrew from NATO and developed their own nuclear forces.

5. The Cuban missile crisis ended when
   a. the American-backed Cuban invaders were defeated at the Bay of Pigs.
   b. the United States agreed to allow Soviet missiles in Cuba as long as they were not armed with nuclear weapons.
   c. Nikita Khrushchev was overthrown, and the new Soviet leader Brezhnev called for an end to the nuclear arms race.
   d. the United States and the Soviet Union agreed that Cuba should become neutral in the Cold War.
   e. the Soviets agreed to pull all missiles out of Cuba and the United States agreed not to invade Cuba.
6. The Kennedy administration was pushed into taking a stronger stand on civil rights by
   a. the civil rights movement, led by the Freedom Riders and Martin Luther King, Jr.
   b. realizing the political advantages of enabling blacks to vote.
   c. pressure from foreign governments and the United Nations.
   d. the threat of violent race riots in northern cities.
   e. civic and business leaders who saw racial conflict as disruptive to the economy.

7. One major reason why Lyndon Johnson won an overwhelming landslide victory in the 1964 election was that
   a. he repudiated many of the policies of the unpopular Kennedy administration.
   b. he promised to take a tough stand in opposing communist aggression in Vietnam.
   c. he successfully portrayed Republican candidate Senator Barry Goldwater as a trigger-happy extremist.
   d. Johnson had achieved considerable personal popularity with the electorate.
   e. his economic plans promised to deliver the nation from hard economic times.

8. President Johnson was more successful than President Kennedy in pushing economic and civil rights reforms through Congress because
   a. he was better at explaining the purposes of the laws in his speeches.
   b. the Democrats gained overwhelming control of Congress in the landslide of 1964.
   c. Republicans were more willing to cooperate with Johnson than with Kennedy.
   d. Johnson was better able to swing southern Democrats behind his proposals.
   e. he was not distracted by foreign policy crises in Vietnam and Latin America.

9. The Civil Rights Act of 1965 guaranteed
   a. desegregation in interstate transportation.
   b. job opportunities for African Americans.
   c. desegregation of high schools and colleges.
   d. voting rights for African Americans.
   e. equal opportunity in housing and an end to discriminatory real estate practices.

10. Which of the following was not among Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society achievements?
    a. Federal aid to education
    b. Civil rights and voting rights for blacks
    c. Federally funded medical care for the elderly and the poor
    d. Clean water and clean air legislation
    e. Immigration liberalization and reform

11. Which of the following was not among the political problems that the Johnson administration faced in waging the Vietnam War?
    a. Growing doubts among some within the administration itself about the wisdom of the war
    b. Strong opposition from world opinion and many of America’s allies
    c. Political opposition and draft resistance inside the United States
    d. The weakness and corruption of frequently changing South Vietnamese governments
    e. The threat that some South Vietnamese government would simply ask the Americans to leave

12. Opposition to the Vietnam War in Congress was centered in the
    a. House Foreign Affairs Committee.
    b. Senate Armed Services Committee.
    c. Republican leadership of the House and Senate.
    d. Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

13. The two antiwar candidates whose strong political showing forced Johnson to withdraw from the 1968 presidential race were
    b. Eugene McCarthy and Robert Kennedy.
    c. J. William Fulbright and George McGovern.
    d. George Wallace and Curtis LeMay.
    e. Richard Nixon and Spiro Agnew.
14. Which of the following was not among the political upheavals and crises that occurred around the world in 1968?
   a. The anticommunist uprising against Fidel Castro’s rule in Cuba.
   b. The Prague spring revolt in Czechoslovakia and its crushing by Soviet tanks.
   c. French student and worker revolts that nearly overthrew the French government.
   d. The student revolts at Columbia University and many other American campuses.
   e. The antiwar political campaigns of Senators Eugene McCarthy and Robert Kennedy.

15. One dominant theme of the 1960s youth culture that had deep roots in American history was:
   a. conflict between the generations.
   b. distrust and hostility toward authority.
   c. the widespread use of mind-altering drugs.
   d. a positive view of sexual experimentation.
   e. interracial collaboration and marriage.

C. Identification

Supply the correct identification for each numbered description.

1. ___________ Kennedy administration program that sent youthful American volunteers to work in underdeveloped countries.

2. ___________ High barrier between East and West, erected during the 1961 Berlin crisis.

3. ___________ Shorthand term for Kennedy administration’s policies aimed at “getting America moving again.”

4. ___________ An attempt to provide American aid for democratic reform in Latin America that met with much disappointment and frustration.

5. ___________ Site where anti-Castro guerrilla forces failed in their U.S.-sponsored invasion.

6. ___________ Tense confrontation between Kennedy and Khrushchev that nearly led to nuclear war in October 1962.

7. ___________ Civil rights demonstrators who sought to desegregate public facilities like bus stations by traveling through the South.

8. ___________ LBJ’s broad program of welfare legislation and social reform that swept through Congress in 1965.

9. ___________ The 1964 congressional action that became a blank check for the Vietnam War.

10. ___________ Law, spurred by Martin Luther King, Jr.’s march from Selma to Montgomery, that guaranteed rights originally given blacks under the Fifteenth Amendment.

11. ___________ Racial slogan that signaled a growing challenge to King’s nonviolent civil rights movement by militant younger blacks.

12. ___________ The Vietnamese New Year celebration, during which the communists launched a heavy offensive against the United States in 1968.

13. ___________ Brief, dramatic war between Israel and neighboring Arab states that led to Israeli conquest and control of the Palestinian West Bank and Gaza.

14. ___________ Student organization that moved from nonviolent protest to underground terrorism within a few years.

15. ___________ Site of an off-duty police raid in 1969 that spurred gay and lesbian activism.
D. Matching People, Places, and Events

Match the person, place, or event in the left column with the proper description in the right column by inserting the correct letter on the blank line.

1. ___ John F. Kennedy
2. ___ Robert S. McNamara
3. ___ Nikita Khrushchev
4. ___ Martin Luther King, Jr.
5. ___ Lyndon B. Johnson
6. ___ Barry M. Goldwater
7. ___ James Meredith
8. ___ Malcolm X
9. ___ J. William Fulbright
10. ___ Eugene J. McCarthy
11. ___ Robert F. Kennedy
12. ___ Richard M. Nixon
13. ___ George C. Wallace
14. ___ Hubert Humphrey
15. ___ Allen Ginsberg

a. First black student admitted to the University of Mississippi, shot during a civil rights march in 1966
b. Cabinet officer who promoted flexible response, but came to doubt the wisdom of the Vietnam War he had presided over
c. New York senator whose antiwar campaign for the presidency was ended by an assassin’s bullet in June 1968
d. Former vice president who staged a remarkable political comeback to win presidential election in 1968
e. Charismatic Black Muslim leader who promoted separatism in the early 1960s
f. Minnesota senator whose antiwar Children’s Crusade helped force Johnson to alter his Vietnam policies
g. Chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and leader of congressional opposition to the Vietnam War
h. Nonviolent black leader whose advocacy of peaceful change came under attack from militants after 1965
i. Vice president whose loyalty to LBJ’s Vietnam policies sent him down to defeat in the 1968 presidential election
j. Charismatic president whose brief administration experienced domestic stalemate and foreign confrontations with communism
k. Third-party candidate whose conservative, hawkish 1968 campaign won 9 million votes and carried five states
l. Aggressive Soviet leader whose failed gamble of putting missiles in Cuba cost him his job
m. Beat poet of the 1950s whose hostility to materialism and establishment values helped lay groundwork for 1960s counterculture
n. Conservative Republican whose crushing defeat opened the way for the liberal Great Society programs
E. Putting Things in Order

Put the following events in correct order by numbering them from 1 to 5.

1. ________ A southern Texas populist replaces a Harvard-educated Irish American in the White House.
2. ________ An American-sponsored anticommunist invasion of Cuba fails.
3. ________ Kennedy successfully risks nuclear confrontation to thwart Khrushchev’s placement of Russian missiles in Cuba.
4. ________ A candidate running on a peace platform obtains a congressional blank check for subsequent expanded military actions against the Communist Vietnamese.
5. ________ Communist military assaults, political divisions between hawks and doves, and assassinations of national leaders form the backdrop for a turbulent election year.

F. Matching Cause and Effect

Match the historical cause in the left column with the proper effect in the right column by writing the correct letter on the blank line.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Effect</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. ____ Kennedy’s unhappiness with the corrupt Diem regime</td>
<td>a. Pushed Johnson into withdrawing as a presidential candidate in 1968</td>
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<td>2. ____ Khrushchev’s placement of missiles in Cuba</td>
<td>b. Brought ever-rising American casualties and a strengthened will to resist on the part of the communist Vietnamese</td>
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<td>3. ____ Johnson’s landslide victory over Goldwater in 1964</td>
<td>c. Led to a U.S.-encouraged coup and greater political instability in South Vietnam</td>
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<td>4. ____ The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution</td>
<td>d. Helped push through historic civil rights legislation in 1964 and 1965</td>
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<td>5. ____ Martin Luther King, Jr.’s civil rights marches</td>
<td>e. Brought along huge Democratic congressional majorities that passed a fistful of Great Society laws</td>
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<td>6. ____ Angry discontent in northern black ghettos</td>
<td>f. Helped Nixon win a minority victory over his divided opposition</td>
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<td>7. ____ American escalation of the Vietnam War</td>
<td>g. Became the questionable legal basis for all of Johnson’s further escalation of the Vietnam War</td>
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<td>8. ____ The communist Vietnamese Tet Offensive in 1968</td>
<td>h. Led to a humiliating defeat when Kennedy forced the Soviet Union to back down</td>
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<td>9. ____ Senator Eugene McCarthy’s strong antiwar campaign</td>
<td>i. Sparked urban riots and the growth of the militant Black Power movement</td>
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<td>10. ____ The deep Democratic Party divisions over Vietnam</td>
<td>j. Led to an American military request for 200,000 more troops as well as growing public discontent with the Vietnam War</td>
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G. Graph Skills

Interpreting Line Graphs

Read the line graph of Poverty in the United States, 1960–2008 on p. 903 carefully and answer the following questions.

1. In what year did the number of people below the poverty line return to approximately the same level it had been at in 1964?

2. In what two years did the percentage of the American population below the poverty line reach its lowest point since 1960?

3. Between what years did the absolute numbers of people below the poverty line rise slightly at the same time those in poverty declined slightly as a percentage of the total population? What would explain this difference?

4. The number of people in poverty in 1966 was about the same as the number in poverty in which subsequent year?

H. Map Mastery

Map Discrimination

Using the maps and charts in Chapter 38, answer the following questions.

1. Vietnam and Southeast Asia: Besides North Vietnam, which two other Southeast Asian countries bordered on South Vietnam?

2. Presidential Election of 1964: How many electoral votes did Barry Goldwater win outside the Deep South in 1964?


4. Presidential Election of 1968: Which five states outside the Northeast did Humphrey carry in 1968? (One of them is not in the continental United States.)
After pushing through Congress the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, President Lyndon Johnson is said to have remarked that as a result “the Democratic party will lose the South for at least an entire generation.” Using the electoral maps of the five elections of 1952, 1960, 1964, and 1968 (in Chapters 37 and 38), write a brief essay describing the changing fortunes of the Republican and Democratic parties in different regions of the country from 1952 to 1968. To what extent did the emerging pattern of dramatically shifting party loyalties in 1964 and 1968 suggest that Johnson may have been right. Are there any other factors that may help explain these changes?

PART III: DEVELOPING HISTORICAL THINKING SKILLS

Constructing a Historical Argument

Read the prompt below and identify the specific skill being tested; be sure to explain why it is that skill. Determine the position you will take with regard to the prompt. Then, in the space provided below, put together specific and relevant evidence to be used in your argument as well as identifying evidence which goes contrary to your argument.

Prompt: It is common to assume that the non-violent policies of the more moderate wing of the Civil Rights movement were more successful than those of the more radical wing. To what extent do you think this is an accurate assessment based on the successes and failures of the Civil Rights movement during the 1960s?

Skill Being Tested:
- Causation
- Continuity or Change Over Time
- Periodization
- Compare or Contrast
- Contextualization

Why?

Moderate

Radical
PART IV: APPLYING WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED

1. What successes and failures did Kennedy's New Frontier experience at home and abroad?

2. President Kennedy's pledge to "land a man on the moon in this decade," which was successfully fulfilled by the Apollo moon landing in 1969, was a dramatic assertion of America's global power and technological leadership of the world. How important was the space program to the New Frontier, and to America's image of itself? Did the Apollo project and the moon landing still retain its luster after Vietnam and the social upheavals of the 1960s?

3. Compare and contrast Kennedy and Johnson as presidential leaders in the 1960s. Why did Kennedy come to be remembered so fondly by many Americans, and Johnson not, even though Kennedy's accomplishments in office were very slim compared to Johnson's enormous Great Society achievements?

4. What led the United States to become so deeply involved in the Vietnam War? (See Chapters 36 and 37 for background on the Cold War, anticolonialism, and earlier events in Vietnam.)

5. How did the civil rights movement move from its difficult beginnings in the 1950s and early 1960s to great successes in 1964-1965. Why did it encounter increasing criticism and opposition from both black militants and the forces of white backlash (represented by George C. Wallace) so soon after its greatest triumphs?

6. Compare and contrast Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X as black leaders. Was the emphasis on black pride and self-determination that Malcolm represented really opposed to King's ideals, or did it just address a different set of problems more deeply rooted in northern ghettos than in southern segregation? Why did so many blacks—and whites—begin to criticize King's emphasis on absolute nonviolence in the freedom struggle?

7. Why did the Vietnam War, and the domestic opposition to it, come to dominate American politics in the 1960s?

8. In later decades, many historians came to interpret the upheavals of 1958, in the United States and elsewhere around the world, as the end of the postwar era. Is this an accurate interpretation? Why did authority of all kinds—and not just political authority—come under assault in this period?

9. When the Democratic party tore itself apart over the Vietnam War and other issues in the late 1960s, the winner proved to be the forces of an emerging conservatism led by Richard Nixon and George Wallace. How and why did conservatism emerge so rapidly from the seemingly devastating Goldwater defeat in the election of 1964?

10. What, if anything, was valuable about the radical social movements of the 1960s, such as those led by Students for a Democratic Society? What was most destructive and negative? Did such movements have any long-term impact?

11. How was the cultural upheaval of the 1960s related to the political and social changes of the decade? Is the youth rebellion best seen as a response to immediate events, or as a consequence of such longer-term forces as the population bulge and economic prosperity? What were the long-term results of the counterculture in all its varieties?