

## When the Old Left Was Young: Student Radicals and America's First Mass Student Movement, 1929-1941

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The Depression era saw the first mass student movement in American history. The crusade, led in large part by young Communists, was both an anti-war campaign and a movement championing a broader and more egalitarian vision of the welfare state than that of the New Dealers. The movement arose from a massive political awakening on campus, caused by the economic crisis of the 1930s, the escalating international tensions, and threat of world war wrought by fascism. At its peak, in the late 1930s, the movement mobilized at least a half million collegians in annual strikes against war. Never before, and not again until the 1960s, were so many undergraduates mobilized for political protest in the United States. The movement lost nearly all its momentum in 1939, when the signing of the Hitler-Stalin pact served to discredit the student Communist leaders. Adding to the emerging portrait of political life in the 1930s, this book is the result of an extraordinary amount of research, has fascinating individual stories to tell, and offers the first comprehensive history of this student insurgency.

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