

**THE RISE AND FALL OF THE AMERICAN COUNTERCULTURE: A
HISTORY OF THE HIPPIES AND OTHER CULTURAL DISSIDENTS**

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

The Rise and Fall of the American Counterculture examines the cultural dissidents and cultural revolutionaries of the 1960s era: the hippies. It fills a major void in the historical literature. Most scholars have focused on one aspect of the counterculture, examined it in a couple of locations, or relegated it to a single chapter. Moreover, scholarly narratives have been nearly identical, repeating the same themes and events, while presenting similar explanations for hippiedom's origins and decline. Many historians utilize secondary sources and rely heavily on Theodore Roszak's pioneering work.

This study is different—it is the first comprehensive history of the hippies and other cultural dissenters, documenting the counterculture throughout the United States from its antecedents in the 1950s, to its origins in the early 1960s, to its emergence in the mid 1960s, to its blooming in the late 1960s, to its decline in the 1970s. Moreover, this study is based on documents seldom examined by historians, the underground newspapers, interviews, flyers, and pamphlets produced by counterculturalists. These sources provide crucial insights into the hippie philosophy and illuminate the forces that caused the counterculture's materialization and decline.

The Rise and Fall of the American Counterculture contends that hippiedom's development occurred in four stages: its antecedents and origins from 1945 to 1965; its nascent period in 1965 and 1966; its flowering from 1967 to 1970; and its zenith and waning from 1970 through 1973.

Cold War America—the institutions, culture, and government—*alienated* the youths who eventually became hippies. The counterculture's constitution underwent fundamental transformations. When it emerged, it consisted entirely of cultural dissidents. By the late 1960s, however, New Leftists, who had earlier differed from hippies in philosophy and appearance, began to embrace dope, long hair, liberated sexuality, and countercultural clothing. A partial blending of the New Left and counterculture occurred; hip politicians, hippie activists, and hybrid counterculturalists—those who expressly combined political and cultural radicalism—became indistinguishable. Despite overlapping and blending, however, the counterculture and New Left remained distinct entities. From 1970 through 1973, the counterculture expanded to include most New Leftists, becoming a united, inclusive, dissident youth culture and counterculture of millions.

For my parents, Randolph and Suzanne

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The American Sixties conjure up a variety of images: sit-ins at segregated lunch-counters; John F. Kennedy's inaugural address in which the president spoke the memorable words, "Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country;" The March on Washington in which Martin Luther King declared, "I have a dream;" soldiers and marines trudging wearily through the sweltering jungles of Vietnam; bloodied student demonstrators clashing with police in full riot gear; exploding ghettos and fires in the streets of Watts, Detroit, and Newark; Robert Kennedy and King lying in blood; Vietcong overrunning the American embassy in Saigon; astronaut Neil Armstrong stepping off the Apollo Lunar Module onto the moon's surface, proclaiming, "That's one small step for [a] man—one giant leap for mankind."

The Sixties also brings to mind another image: colorfully-dressed, flowers-in-their-hair youth dancing with wild abandon to the clamorous, psychedelic sounds of the Jefferson Airplane and Grateful Dead at a love-in. *The Rise and Fall of the American Counterculture* examines these individuals, the cultural dissidents and cultural revolutionaries of the 1960s era: the hippies. Hippies rebelled against and rejected Cold War culture and mainstream societal values; these sexually liberated individuals championed communal living, embraced Eastern religions and mysticism, preached and practiced love and peace, and sought more meaningful, authentic lives. They also

endeavored to create a better culture based on moral precepts—community, cooperation, truthfulness, love, empathy, and egalitarianism.

Numerous scholars have written about the counterculture, and the first studies appeared in the late 1960s and early 1970s when it was at its height. Psychologists, psychiatrists, anthropologists, sociologists, journalists, English professors, and other academics descended on countercultural enclaves and communes to study the behavior of the hippies.¹

Historians began investigating the counterculture when it was at its zenith, and their explorations have persisted over the last 40 years. Many have written about the 1960s or the post-World War II era and they examined the counterculture in a single chapter; examples include William L. O' Neill's *Coming Apart* (1971), Allen J. Matusow's *The Unraveling of America* (1984), Terry H. Anderson's *The Movement and the Sixties* (1995), Mark Hamilton Lytle's *America's Uncivil Wars* (2006), and Irwin Unger's recent text, *The Sixties*.²

¹ Leonard Wolf and Deborah Wolf, eds., *Voices From the Love Generation* (Boston, 1968); Burton H. Wolfe, *The Hippies* (New York, 1968); Lewis Yablonsky, *The Hippie Trip* (New York, 1968); Helen Swick Perry, *The Human Be-In* (New York, 1970); Delbert L. Earisman, *Hippies in Our Midst: The Rebellion Beyond Rebellion* (Philadelphia, 1968); John Gruen, *The New Bohemia* (New York, 1966); J.L. Simmons and Barry Winograd, *Its Happening* (Santa Barbara, 1966); Roy Ald, *The Youth Communes* (New York, 1970); Rosabeth Moss Kanter, *Commitment and Community: Communes and Utopias in Sociological Perspective* (Cambridge, 1972); Keith Melville, *Communes in the Counter Culture* (New York, 1972); Benjamin Zablocki, *The Joyful Community* (Baltimore, 1971); Richard Fairfield, *Communes USA: A Personal Tour* (Baltimore, 1972); Lawrence Veysey, *Communal Experience: Anarchist and Mystical Counter-Cultures in America* (New York, 1973).

² William L. O'Neill, *Coming Apart: An Informal History of America in the 1960s* (Chicago, 1971); Allen J. Matusow, *The Unraveling of America: A History of Liberalism in the 1960s* (New York, 1984); Terry H. Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties* (New York, 1995); Mark Hamilton Lytle, *America's Uncivil Wars: The Sixties Era From Elvis to the Fall of Richard Nixon* (New York, 2006); Irwin Unger, *The Sixties* (New York, 2011); Other single chapters on the counterculture are in Edward P. Morgan, *The 60s Experience: Hard Lessons about Modern America* (Philadelphia, 1991); William E. Leuchtenburg, *A Troubled Feast: American Society Since 1945* (Boston, 1979); David Burner, *Making Peace With the 60s* (Princeton, NJ, 1996); David Chalmers, *And the Crooked Places Made Straight: The*

Other studies have focused on one particular element of the counterculture. Todd Gitlin's *The Sixties* (1987) and W. J. Rorabaugh's *Berkeley at War* (1989) discussed the counterculture, but concentrated primarily on the New Left and campus activism. Timothy Miller has written *Hippies and American Values* (1991), which analyzed hippie ethics, and the *60s Communes* (1999), an investigation of intentional communities. Abe Peck's *Uncovering the Sixties* (1985), and John McMillian's *Smoking Typewriters* (2011) document the history of the underground press. Charles Perry penned a history of the Haight-Ashbury, and more recently, Larry Eskridge focused on the "Jesus People" movement in *God's Forever Family* (2013), while Gretchen Lemke-Santangelo investigated hippie women in *Daughters of Aquarius* (2009). Tim Hodgdon scrutinizes masculinity in *Manhood in the Age of Aquarius* (2008), and Andrew G. Kirk's *Counterculture Green* (2007), and Frank Zelko's *Make It a Green Peace!* (2013) explore counterculture environmentalism. Other recent contributions to the growing literature include Sherry L. Smith's book on the hippies' fascination with American Indians, Travis D. Stimeling's work on hippie "cosmic cowboys" in Austin, and Michael J. Kramer's volume studying the intersection of sixties rock music and American citizenship. Lastly, *Imagine Nation* (2002), edited by Peter Braunstein and Michael

Struggle for Social Change in the 1960s (Baltimore, 1991); Godfrey Hodgson, *America in Our Time: From World War II to Nixon, What Happened and Why?* (New York, 1976); David Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams: America in the 1960s* (New York, 1994); Klaus P. Fischer, *America in White, Black, and Gray: The Stormy 1960s* (New York, 2006).

William Doyle, contains essays probing the counterculture's relationship to drugs, feminism, homosexuality, and race.³

While all these studies are valuable, they are insufficient at documenting the totality of the counterculture. Early books by journalists, sociologists, and other academics, are limited in scope geographically, examining youths in one city, district, or commune. Sampling is another problem, as the majority of authors conversed with, and observed, only a handful of hippies. These scholars attempted to discern the counterculture's values, worldviews, and practices, and used their findings to comment on the state of political, economic, social, and cultural affairs in America at that particular moment. They did not have the benefit of historical hindsight; thus, they were unable to accurately place their studies within the counterculture's proper historical context and evolutionary trajectory.

Histories are also deficient. Books focused on one particular element lack breadth, while single chapter histories fail to provide the counterculture with a deep and

³ Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York, 1987); W.J. Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War: The 1960s* (New York, 1989); Timothy Miller, *The Hippies and American Values* (Knoxville, 1991); Timothy Miller, *The 60s Communes: Hippies and Beyond* (Syracuse, 1999); Abe Peck, *Uncovering the Sixties: The Life and Times of the Underground Press* (New York, 1985); John McMillian, *Smoking Typewriters: The Sixties Underground Press and the Rise of Alternative Media in America* (New York, 2011); Charles Perry, *The Haight-Ashbury: A History* (New York, 1984); Larry Eskridge, *God's Forever Family: The Jesus People Movement in America* (New York, 2013); Gretchen Lemke-Santangelo, *Daughters of Aquarius: Women of the Sixties Counterculture* (Lawrence, 2009); Tim Hodgdon, *Manhood in the Age of Aquarius: Masculinity in Two Countercultural Communities, 1965-83* (New York, 2008); Andrew G. Kirk, *Counterculture Green: The Whole Earth Catalog and American Environmentalism* (Lawrence, 2007); Frank Zelko, *Make It a Green Peace!: The Rise of Countercultural Environmentalism* (New York, 2013); Sherry L. Smith, *Hippies, Indians, and the Fight for Red Power* (New York, 2012); Travis D. Stimeling, *Cosmic Cowboys and New Hicks: The Countercultural Sounds of Austin's Progressive Country Music Scene* (New York, 2011); Michael J. Kramer, *The Republic of Rock: Music and Citizenship in the Sixties Counterculture* (New York, 2013); Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle, eds., *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960s and '70s* (New York, 2002).

thorough treatment. Most existing works are grounded in secondary sources. Numerous histories present nearly identical interpretations of the counterculture's origins, values, and decline. Theodore Roszak's *The Making of a Counterculture* remains an authoritative and popular source for historians and many reference and reiterate his scholarship. Many studies also offer similar narratives; the same people, themes, hippie values, and "easy-to follow 'big moments'" are invariably profiled and discussed: Bob Dylan, the Beatles, Timothy Leary, Ken Kesey, the Diggers, LSD, liberated sexuality, "acid tests," Trips Festival, Human Be-In, Monterey Pop, and Woodstock. Most scholars then turn to the "dark side" of hippiedom—the decline of Haight-Ashbury, the Manson Family's bloody killing spree, the Altamont death concert debacle—events, which, for them, represent "mutually-reinforcing tombstones." For these authors, the counterculture did not survive the sixties, and, as a result, little has been written about cultural rebels in the early 1970s—a colossal historiographical error given that hippiedom hit its apex at that time. Histories, with few exceptions, are also geographically circumscribed, focusing on San Francisco and the East Village of New York. Furthermore, many scholars tend to favor description over analysis, telling the reader what hippies did, while neglecting to elucidate their motivations for doing it.⁴

Scholarship has become narrow and undiversified, focusing on one aspect of hippiedom, a few locations, or repeating the same themes and events of the era. No scholar has given the counterculture a fresh investigation since the 1960s. *The Rise and*

⁴ Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture: Reflections on the Technocratic Society and Its Youthful Opposition* (Garden City, NY, 1969); Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle, "Introduction: Historicizing the American Counterculture of the 1960s and 70s," in *Imagine Nation*, eds., Braunstein and Doyle, 7-8.

Fall of the American Counterculture is a novel study, a comprehensive history documenting the counterculture throughout the United States from its antecedents in the 1950s, to its origins in the early 1960s, to its beginnings in the mid 1960s, to its blooming in the late 1960s, to its decline in the 1970s. Moreover, this study is the first all-encompassing history to examine documents produced by “freaks” throughout hippiedom’s existence, from 1965 through 1973. These underutilized documents—underground newspapers, interviews, memoirs, personal correspondence, flyers, and pamphlets—are the most reliable and authoritative sources for discerning the counterculture’s rationale for its behavior and actions. They also reveal its principles and the issues behind its origins, growth, and decline. These hippie documents are also augmented by additional primary sources: mainstream or “Establishment” newspapers and magazines. While it is true that some *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Life*, and *New York Times* journalists wrote speculative, sensational, and inaccurate articles, others published insightful and informative stories. These underground and mainstream sources, examined together, provide crucial evidence for new revelations and interpretations.

This study tackles a major historiographical problem: defining “counterculture.” It has been over 40 years since Theodore Roszak popularized the term, yet historians continue to debate its meaning. Who constituted the counterculture? Roszak included African-American militants, New Leftists, and hippies, while historians over the next three decades disregarded that definition, defining it as the cohort of cultural dissidents who eschewed political activism in favor of individual pursuits and personal liberation. Other scholars have offered different interpretations. David McBride’s counterculture

encompassed radical politicians and hippies; similarly, Alice Echols, Doug Rossinow, and Julie Stephens have contested the traditional division of New Left and counterculture. Jeremi Suri greatly expanded his counterculture to include a wide variety of cultural and political dissenters such as civil rights marchers, anti-war activists, Yippies, Weather Underground—even Betty Freidan.⁵

The time has come to establish a definitive meaning for the term “counterculture.” This study defines the counterculture as young cultural rebels who rejected the traditions, conventions, values, and lifestyles of the American mainstream and middle-class. Counterculturalists included artists, communards, “happeners,” street musicians, psychedelists, underground filmmakers and journalists, mind and palm readers, guerrilla theatre actors and actresses, Boo-Hoos, Diggers, Provos, “Jesus Freaks,” champions of sexual freedom, and cultural activists that engineered “smoke-ins” and “nude-ins.” Beginning in the late sixties, and continuing into the early part of the next decade, the counterculture expanded to encompass political radicals and activists who also rejected the dominant culture such as anti-war demonstrators, yippies, zippies, environmentalists, gays, and Vietnam veterans. Most of the individuals mentioned above, at one time or another, could be classified as hippies, for hippies were the embodiment of the counterculture. This study elucidates the counterculture’s

⁵ David McBride, “Death City Radicals: The Counterculture in Los Angeles,” in *The New Left Revisited*, ed. John McMillian and Paul Buhle (Philadelphia, 2003); Alice Echols, “Nothing Distant About It: Women’s Liberation and Sixties Radicalism,” in *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, ed. David Farber (Chapel Hill, 1994); Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity, and the New Left in America* (New York, 1998); Julie Stephens, *Anti-Disciplinary Protest: Sixties Radicalism and Post-Modernism* (New York, 1998); Jeremi Suri, “The Rise and Fall of an International Counterculture, 1960-1975” *The American Historical Review* 114 (February 2009): 45-68.

complexity, its continually evolving values, and its constantly changing constitution, which defined and redefined it throughout its near decade-long existence.

The Rise and Fall of the American Counterculture also fundamentally contests the cliché “sex, drugs, and rock and roll” interpretation of the counterculture, as its central essence and purpose was considerably more sophisticated and profound: hippies attempted to create a new, superior society based on an alternative culture and institutions. Many others, however, never adhered to such a high ideal; for them, the counterculture was simply a frame of mind, an attitude, and a lifestyle. It must also be said that the counterculture did not constitute a “movement” in a formal sense. There was no structure, no organizations, no leaders, and no rigid, dogmatic ideology; in fact, as we shall see, hippies frequently articulated their skepticism and criticisms of leaders and mass movements. Furthermore, contrary to popular belief—especially among the generations that followed the baby-boomers—not every youth in the 1960s was a hippie. Only a tiny minority of young people ever fully embraced the counterculture lifestyle.

A word on terminology. Because hippies made up the majority of the counterculture, “hippies,” “hippiedom,” and “counterculture” are used interchangeably. Some cultural rebels did not consider themselves hippies, as they found the term imprecise, inadequate, condescending, and media-manufactured. Here, hippie is used in a general sense, especially when the identities of a historical speakers or actors are unknown; otherwise, great care has been taken to be as accurate as possible when referring to specific individuals. Other expressions commonly employed are “dropout,” “longhair,” and “counterculturalist,” words which also signify hippies and other cultural

dissidents. Hippies used most of the terms above to describe themselves. Some cultural radicals called one another “freaks,” or “freeks,” words that carried positive connotations. “Head” denotes a heavy dope or drug user. On the subject of drugs, “dope” and “drugs” are used in the sense that hippies understood them. “Dope” indicates mind-expanding, “good” drugs like LSD, Marijuana, and peyote, while “drugs” indicates harmful, addictive, and middle-class substances such as alcohol, heroin, barbiturates, and amphetamines. Finally, other words that appear repeatedly are “Establishment,” and “the System,” phrases hippies used to refer to the nation’s dominant, entrenched, social, cultural, and political order. The Establishment included “straights,” politicians, schools, universities, churches, judges, military, and the police—all the people and institutions hippies believed were antiquated, immoral, and oppressive.

A persistent theme throughout this study concerns the relationship of the counterculture to the New Left. The New Left represented a break from the Communists, democratic Socialists, Stalinists, and Trotskyists of the Old Left. A new generation raised in affluence emerged in the 1960s and created a new kind of political culture. Events beyond America’s shores—Mahatma Ghandi’s nonviolent struggle to overthrow British rule, emerging independent African nations, and Fidel Castro’s Cuban Revolution—inspired New Leftists. In 1960, young Southern civil rights workers founded the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), an organization dedicated to creating a “beloved community,” while working to abolish Jim Crow. That same year, college activists established Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the

organization that best exemplified the white New Left. Two years later, SDS drafted its manifesto, *The Port Huron Statement*, in which it articulated its devotion to the principle of “participatory democracy.” The New Left confronted Cold War and Great Society liberalism, demonstrated against the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC), protested the arms race, fought poverty and Jim Crow segregation, challenged campus paternalism and bureaucracy, agitated for free speech rights, and later, rallied against the Vietnam War. Activists and students committed to political and social change, New Leftists confronted the existing political Establishment. Many counterculturalists, on the other hand, dropped out of the mainstream and refused to participate in political demonstrations. Hippies—many who were non-students or ex-students—dissented against the dominant culture and mainly strived for personal transformations and self-actualization. Of course, the line separating the New Left and counterculture was not always precise; the two strands of the youth rebellion converged and overlapped at various times throughout the sixties.

This dynamic, fluid, and often volatile relationship between the New Left and counterculture will be thoroughly explored in the following pages as will the continually changing definition of the counterculture.

The Rise and Fall of the American Counterculture is organized chronologically. The counterculture’s development consisted of four basic periods: its antecedents and origins from 1945 to 1965; its inchoate years in 1965 and 1966; its flowering from 1967 to 1970; and its apogee and decline from 1970 through 1973. A chapter is devoted to each of these distinct stages.

Following the Introduction, Chapter II documents the counterculture's genesis from 1945 to 1965, arguing that following World War II, Cold War America—the culture, government, and institutions—*alienated* soon-to-be hippies, precipitating their renunciation of mainstream society's traditions, values, and lifestyles. This study thus challenges traditional interpretations that emphasize the influence and importance of dissenting intellectuals, black hipsters and black culture, the Beats, post-war affluence and prolonged adolescence as forerunners of, and causes for, hippiedom.

Chapter III analyzes the counterculture in its early years—1965 and 1966—when it emerged in large coastal cities and at large universities. During this period, alienation skyrocketed with the onset of the Vietnam War, causing the counterculture's exponential growth. The counterculture's fundamental values developed, while its forms evolved from “happenings” to dancehall concerts to the first “be-ins.” This chapter discusses San Francisco and the fledgling Haight-Ashbury scene, and, in contrast to most histories, it covers the development of hippie activity elsewhere, in Los Angeles and New York City. It also contests traditional interpretations that stress the importance of individuals like Ken Kesey and Timothy Leary to hippiedom's development.

Chapter IV examines the counterculture from 1967 to 1970, documenting its unprecedented growth, expansion, and development in every region of America. During the Age of Aquarius—a new era of optimism, faith, and love—the quintessential counterculture burgeoned. Hippie values became more numerous, diverse, and complex, as the flower people gathered for love-ins and massive rock festivals, advocated peace, love, and “Flower Power,” and confronted the war makers at the Pentagon, placing

daisies in rifle barrels. A partial blending of the New Left and counterculture occurred as more hippies engaged in political protest and New Leftists began exhibiting hippie values and behavior. New Left and counterculture, however, remained distinct entities. This chapter also analyzes the relationship between hippies and racial minorities, revealing the extent to which white freaks extended their friendship to the African-American and Latino communities. It also disputes the orthodox perspective of the counterculture's decline, arguing that the Manson murders, Altamont, and the degeneration of Haight-Ashbury did not mark the end of hippiedom, nor did these events destroy the counterculture's project, or its faith in itself.

Chapter V explores hippiedom in its final years, from 1970 through 1973, when it reached its pinnacle before fading away. After President Nixon expanded the war into Cambodia and the National Guard killed four students at Kent State, nearly all remaining divisions between the New Left and hippies faded and blurred as radical youth united against the Nixon administration. The counterculture had transformed into a massive, united, dissident youth culture and countersociety; political and cultural dissenters, for the most part, became the same people. This chapter also analyzes the counterculture's relationship to, and interactions with, other significant social movements of the day: the women's movement and gay liberation. It closes with an analysis and discussion of the circumstances that caused the counterculture's demise.

Lastly, Chapter VI, the Conclusion, discusses the counterculture's legacies, demonstrating how it transformed America, and ends with an evaluation of the counterculture, followed by concluding remarks

CHAPTER II

“THE PRISON WAS THE AMERICAN DREAM”: COLD WAR AMERICA AND THE ORIGINS OF THE COUNTERCULTURE, 1945-1964

“I didn’t really understand. I really was like in the system. I was really trained to be like a soft machinery robot. I was in prison and didn’t know I was in prison And the prison was the American dream.”—Ron Thelin¹

On Saturday, January 14, 1967, the “World’s First Human Be-in” took place on a polo field in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco. Billed as the “Gathering of the Tribes,” the event drew 10,000 people. “Perfect. The gods have shined on us . . . The vibrations from this day will extend across the country and turn on millions of people from California to New York,” asserted Ron Thelin, co-owner of the Psychedelic Shop in Haight-Ashbury. The crowd, mostly made up of young people, “wore feathers, furs, plumes, floppy hats, tusks, bells, chimes, talismans, beaded charms, tiaras of flowers, animal hides, sequins, and prayer cloths.” Others came dressed as “cowboys, pioneer scouts, pirates, angels, devils, Confederate and Revolutionary Army heroes, reincarnated Greta Garbos and Rudolph Valentinos.” Many smoked marijuana and dropped LSD. All the while, rock bands Grateful Dead, Big Brother and the Holding Company, and Quicksilver Messenger Service jammed away as the hippies grooved to the sounds.

¹ Wolf, ed., *Voices From the Love Generation*, 216.

The Slocums, tourists on vacation from Kansas, gazed upon the gathering. “They’re those hippies,” said Mrs. Slocum. “Lordy, I never knew there were so many of them. See those girls in long hair and bare feet? They say they never wash. We’d best go someplace else now. I wouldn’t be surprised if they—well, they say they have orgies, don’t you know.”

“I wonder what they’re rebelling against?” asked Mr. Slocum, standing confused in his red golf slacks. “I don’t understand it. I’d sure like to know where they all came from and why they’re here.”²

Why were they there? Many historians have studied the counterculture, yet few have devoted much analysis to its origins. Theodore Roszak—who popularized the term “counter culture”—argued in 1969 that hippies emerged in opposition to the technocracy, “that society in which those who govern justify themselves by appeal to technical experts who, in turn, justify themselves by appeal to scientific forms of knowledge. And beyond the authority of science, there is no appeal.” For Roszak, youthful dissidents sought to undermine the scientific worldview, questioning society’s notions of reason and reality. In contrast to technocrats and the technocracy, dissenters exercised the “non-intellective capacities of the personality—those capacities that take fire from visionary splendor and the experience of human communion.” Roszak remains

² Wolfe, *The Hippies*, 9-14.

influential as historians continue to cite his interpretation when explaining the counterculture's development.³

Most scholars emphasize continuities between the Beats and the hippies, while some take the connection further, contending that the Beats exerted direct influence on the younger generation, acting as participants, mentors, and leaders. Others argue that LSD was the crucial element that facilitated a transformation from Beat to hip.⁴

In addition to the impact of the Beats, researchers have attributed the counterculture's growth to a variety of influences: permissive childrearing, post-war affluence, a huge generation disillusioned by the impersonal multiversity, and young people intentionally suspending themselves between adolescence and adulthood. Dissenting writers, intellectuals, and the cultural and social criticisms of Lenny Bruce, films, and magazines are stressed, as is the influence of black culture, the black hipster, and early rock and roll. For many scholars, it seems, disaffected youth needed something to rouse them—throw in Timothy Leary, Ken Kesey, the Beatles, and Bob Dylan and one apparently has the necessary catalysts responsible for the materialization of hippiedom.⁵

Although a few of the aforementioned forces contributed to its rise, an extensive analysis of counterculture newspapers, memoirs, and interviews reveals that Cold War

³ Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture*, 8, 50-51 and his interpretation appears in the following works: Morgan, *The 60s Experience*, 170-171, 173; Leuchtenburg, *A Troubled Feast*, 180; Burner, *Making Peace With the 60s*, 129; Chalmers, *And the Crooked Places Made Straight*, 89.

⁴ Direct influence is Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, 324-325; Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams*, 172; On transformation see Matusow, *The Unraveling of America*, 287 and Unger, *The Sixties*, 146.

⁵ O'Neill, *Coming Apart*, 234-243; Leuchtenburg, *A Troubled Feast*, 179; Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, 311-312, 315-316; Matusow, *The Unraveling of America*, 277-287, 306; Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture*, 30-32; Miller, *The 60s Communes*, 4-6; Fischer, *America in White, Black, and Gray*, 300-302; Morgan, *The 60s Experience*, 173; Chalmers, *And the Crooked Places Made Straight*, 95-97.

America—the culture, government, and institutions—*alienated* the young people who became hippies, causing the disillusioned to reject society’s dominant traditions, conventions, values, and prescribed behavior. “The soul of hip . . . is dysfunction,” explained Detroit’s *Fifth Estate*. “Defined, *Hip is alienation.*”⁶

Historians continue to debate the nature of the late 1940s and the 1950s. In one camp are those who argue stability, happiness, and prosperity made these decades distinctive; in the other, are those who characterize the immediate post-war years as a stifling time, rife with consensus, conformity, and neglected social problems. This study will not enter that debate because the period’s objective essence is not of central concern. What ultimately matters is how later longhairs *experienced* and *perceived* the forties and fifties.

The hippie population numbered in the millions and each counterculturalist had deeply personal motives for why they abandoned the mainstream. A 25-year-old indulging in the “acid tests” in 1965 most likely dropped out for different reasons than a 18-year-old communitarian living at The Farm in 1973. The oldest hippies were born, roughly, between 1935 and 1945. Some were born even earlier. Co-founder of the radical band the Fugs, Tuli Kupferberg, for example, was born in 1923. These elder hippies undoubtedly experienced the Red Scare, suburbia, the arms race, and the effects of racial injustice more acutely than their baby boomer peers. Boomers were likely

⁶ Art Johnson, “What Have You Got?” *Fifth Estate*, 15-30 November 1966; Miller contends in *The Hippies and American Values* that the oppressiveness of American culture, institutions, and the Establishment toward non-conformists produced alienation. Terry H. Anderson makes the most thorough case for alienation in *The Movement and the Sixties* (New York, 1995), arguing that youth were inundated with society’s inconsistencies, ironies, and contradictions. The hypocrisy evident in double standards for men and women, children and parents, individuals and the government, along with racism, campus paternalism, the war in Vietnam, and an unfair draft caused a rebellion from Cold War culture.

concerned more about the Vietnam War and a coercive draft rather than the vestiges of McCarthyism.

Still, all lived through this period and the evidence suggests several common themes, events, and developments, produced alienation. In 1969, an underground journalist in Indiana stated sarcastically: “Joe McCarthy, Elvis Presley, the N.Y. Yankees and a Humpty Dumpty president characterized the 50’s. Niggers were niggers, commies were commies and freedom was the U.S.A.” An unsophisticated observation, certainly, yet an accurate portrayal of how future freaks interpreted their surroundings. Now, let us examine the forces that produced alienation—and the counterculture.⁷

When the world’s bloodiest war ended, an estimated 60 million people had perished, including six million Jews in the Holocaust. Over 405,000 Americans died and 670, 800 were wounded. Yet, for most citizens, it had been a “Good War.” Material livelihoods improved, the result of industrial mobilization that created prosperity, ending the Great Depression. Americans had pulled together, working in tandem stateside, doing their part to ensure victory overseas. A just and necessary war, the United States had fought on the side of freedom and democracy, and the troops returned home as heroes. Four years earlier, the publisher of *Time*, Henry Luce, wrote of the “American Century,” and many shared his conviction that the United States could extend capitalism and democracy to the rest of the globe. The greatest economic and military power in the world with a monopoly on the Bomb, some hoped that Washington

⁷ Michael Brand, “And You Don’t Know What It Is, Do You, Mr. Jones?,” *Bauls* (West Lafayette, IN), 6 January 1969- 2 February 1969.

might prevent further wars, using the Bomb as leverage. In August 1945, then, the public looked to the future with high hopes and optimism.⁸

This optimism quickly faded, however, for shortly after the Allied victory, the nation found itself engaged in an ideological, economic, and strategic struggle with the Soviet Union: the Cold War. Joseph Stalin ignored stipulations made at Yalta in February 1945, which called for the division of Germany into four separate zones and for free elections in liberated Europe. With the assistance of the Red Army, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Albania, and Poland established Communist governments, while Russia enveloped East Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. In early 1946 George F. Kennan sent his “Long Telegram” from the American embassy in Moscow, clarifying for U.S. authorities the mindset of the USSR. It asserted that Soviet security, from the Kremlin’s perspective, was contingent on America’s weakness. Two weeks later, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill proclaimed: “From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent.” Stalin charged his former allies with hostility towards his designs for Eastern Europe and predicted an inevitable war between capitalism and Communism. The Grand Alliance of America, Great Britain, and Russia fell apart. The Cold War had begun.⁹

President Harry S. Truman was determined to resist further Communist expansion. In March 1947 before a joint session of Congress he articulated the Truman Doctrine, the basis of Washington’s foreign policy for the next forty years: containment.

⁸ James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945-1974* (New York, 1996), 4, 7-9.

⁹ Churchill quoted in Joseph Goulden, *The Best Years, 1945-1950* (New York, 1976), 257.

The United States, the president declared, would “support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.” Congress authorized \$400 million in military aid to beleaguered Greece and Turkey and America set about rebuilding and stabilizing Western Europe with the Marshall Plan.¹⁰

Peace had not followed victory to the dismay of the United States and its people. Having defeated Hitler, America turned to confront Stalin’s “red fascism.” World War II had made a tremendous impact on the outlook of the men who crafted the nation’s foreign policy. America, these men thought, had fought an honorable and necessary war. The United States stood firmly for all that was good. Munich had imparted an important lesson: appeasement allowed belligerent nations to rampage over Europe in the 1930s; diplomacy and concessions could not prevent further wars, but forceful confrontation with aggressors could. The world, the Establishmentarians believed, was locked in a struggle between democratic capitalism and Communism, good and evil, freedom and tyranny. And monolithic international Communism—directed from the Kremlin—seemed to be creeping inexorably across the globe. A “victory for communism anywhere” represented a “defeat for noncommunism everywhere.” Consequently, policy-makers strived to maintain a geopolitical balance of power, countering the Soviets militarily and strategically, fighting Communism “wherever the specters of Marx and Lenin reared their ugly heads.”¹¹

¹⁰ Truman quoted in Alonzo L. Hamby, *Man of the People: A Life of Harry S. Truman* (New York, 1995), 387.

¹¹ Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, 103; H. W. Brands, *The Devil We Knew: Americans and the Cold War* (New York, 1993), 22, 31.

To protect its people, allies, and strategic interests, Washington embarked on a massive military buildup. In the spring of 1950, Truman's National Security Council produced NSC-68, a document that further defined and clarified containment. The paper argued that the Russians sought to dominate the world, and as such, America should be prepared to extinguish Communism wherever it emerged. In order to meet the threat, NSC-68 recommended nearly a four-fold increase in defense spending. Subsequently, expenditures increased from \$13 billion in 1950 to \$50 billion three years later. In 1940 defense spending constituted 16 percent of the federal budget; by 1959 it accounted for over half. The government increasingly invested in new military technology. In 1952 it exploded the hydrogen bomb, a weapon even more powerful than the one used on Japan in 1945. When the sixties began, America had in its arsenal long range strategic bombers, and missiles capable of traversing oceans and continents.¹²

President Dwight Eisenhower combated Communism with a fervor equal to Truman's. Ike's Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, criticized containment for being too passive and argued for "rolling back" Communism, "liberating" captive nations from its grip. In early 1954 he unveiled his "massive retaliation" policy. Instead of maintaining a large and costly army, the U.S. could threaten adversaries with less expensive nuclear weapons—"more bang for the buck." Dulles also spoke of "Brinkmanship," which entailed pushing Russia to the edge of war so that America might have its way.

¹² Brands, *The Devil We Knew*, 39.

This obsession with checking Communism overseas became an obsession with ferreting out Communists at home, leading to the development of the Red Scare. Historians have identified several factors that account for its outbreak. By the late forties, a broad anti-Communist consensus had coalesced. Americans of all stripes—conservatives, liberals, Republicans, Democrats, elite politicians, intellectuals, union members, and commoners—shared an anti-Communist worldview. This consensus gave politicians and the government ample space to persecute reds as they saw fit. Furthermore, many, if not most, Americans had little concern for the civil liberties of political dissenters. Partisanship also played a major role as the Communist issue provided conservatives with an opportunity to claw their way back to power after nearly twenty years of political domination by liberal New Dealers. Finally, ideas of historic American exceptionalism bolstered the crusade. Many strongly believed that divine providence and history had guided the nation since its earliest founders fled the degenerate Old World and established an “Eden” in the New. Representative government, free markets, individualism, and godliness, they thought, made America a superior civilization, diametrically different from and opposed to Marxist philosophy and Communism in every conceivable way.¹³

Fears of domestic subversion and anxiety stemming from Cold War developments abroad, combined with the Republican Congressional triumph in 1946, led to the creation of a federal employee loyalty program after Truman issued Executive

¹³ See Richard Fried, *Nightmare in Red: The McCarthy Era in Perspective* (New York, 1990) and Douglas T. Miller and Marion Nowak, *The Fifties: The Way We Really Were* (Garden City, NY, 1975), 23-24.

Order 9835 in March 1947. Truman’s program eventually investigated 6.6 million people. The standard for dismissal included “reasonable grounds” for “belief that the person involved is disloyal to the Government of the United States.” In 1951 the standards were revised when “reasonable grounds” became “reasonable doubt.” An employee’s “potential” for subversion—based on their thoughts and associations rather than an obvious act of disloyalty—resulted in verdicts of guilt. Standards determining whether an individual posed a threat to security were largely subjective as the criteria was left to the discretions and personal beliefs of board members. The accused received a list of charges, but authorities withheld information deemed secret. Informants—often FBI agents—did not have to testify; neither could the accused challenge them. The board held in its possession the sole “evidence.”¹⁴

Under these circumstances, the program trampled individual liberty. Champions of the First Amendment raised eyebrows. One man was deemed a security risk after he shared his belief that the free speech of Communists should be guarded at all times, even in the midst of a crisis. A suspect’s perspectives on race relations, sex, religion, and foreign policy could potentially elicit concerns. Officials asked a woman whether she wanted blood banks to segregate white and black blood. Other investigators inquired, “What do you think of female chastity?” and “Have you provided any sort of religious training for your children?” A typist came up on charges for expressing doubts about the Marshall Plan and supporting an American troop withdrawal from Germany—“Communistic opinions.” The FBI interviewed an African-American man who shined

¹⁴ Miller and Nowak, *The Fifties*, 26; Fried, *Nightmare in Red*, 66-70; Goulden, *The Best Years*, 309.

shoes at the Pentagon seventy times before granting him a clearance. Why? Years before the bootblack had contributed ten dollars to the Scottsboro Boys' defense fund.¹⁵

Eisenhower, too, intended to extirpate subversives, replacing Truman's loyalty program with his own by executive order in April 1953. GOP leaders touted their anti-Communist credentials, boasting of the 1,456 "security risks" ousted under the Republican administration. The federal civil service faced a purge under Truman and Eisenhower. Between 1947 and 1956, one scholar has estimated, loyalty programs terminated 2,700 employees, while another 12,000 resigned.¹⁶

Loyalty oaths constituted only part of a larger apparatus for uprooting undesirables. The House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC), in conjunction with the FBI and CIA, hunted for Communists and their sympathizers in the federal government, labor unions, universities, and churches. By 1949 HUAC possessed files on over a million people. Over the next ten years, it passed to employers and blacklists information on 60,000 persons and 12,000 organizations.¹⁷

In October 1947 HUAC targeted Hollywood, charging the industry with spreading Communist propaganda. During the war, studios had made a few pro-Soviet films. Committee member John Rankin referred to Hollywood as "the greatest hotbed of subversive activities in the United States." The "Hollywood Ten," invoking the First Amendment, refused to answer questions about their politics, and served jail sentences

¹⁵ Fried, *Nightmare in Red*, 70-72; David Cate, *The Great Fear: The Anti-Communist Purge Under Truman and Eisenhower* (New York, 1978), 280-281.

¹⁶ Fried, *Nightmare in Red*, 133-134; Cate, *Great Fear*, 275.

¹⁷ Lawrence S. Wittner, *Cold War America: From Hiroshima to Watergate* (New York, 1978), 91-92.

for contempt of Congress. The industry, conscious of its public image, “blacklisted” 400 individuals, preventing them from attaining employment.¹⁸

The Red Scare’s effects on acting lasted into the early 1960s. “Communism was not something one talked about,” recalled a later ardent New York counterculturalist, Jim Fouratt. “I was an actor, and I knew that . . . an actor didn’t talk about politics.”¹⁹

The Communist Party was more of a concern and the government aspired to eviscerate it. In July 1948 a federal grand jury indicted twelve of the party’s leaders for violation of the Smith Act, a law established earlier, which made it illegal to form organizations that advocated or plotted the overthrow of the government by violent means. The trial began in January 1949 and ended in October with a guilty verdict for eleven of the men. In 1951 the Supreme Court upheld the decision. Championing Marxist-Leninist principles apparently constituted intent to engage in revolution and the Court’s decision essentially criminalized membership in the Communist Party at the elite level.²⁰

The cultural and political climate was more than favorable for the emergence of the era’s most notorious demagogue: Joseph McCarthy. In February 1950 the junior senator from Wisconsin delivered a speech in Wheeling, West Virginia in which he proclaimed he had in his hand a list of 205 confirmed Communists working in the State Department. He did not actually have a list, but that hardly mattered, for McCarthy was skilled at self-promotion, making false accusations, naming names, and citing numbers.

¹⁸ Rankin quoted in Stephen J. Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War* (Baltimore, 1991), 129.

¹⁹ Ron Chepesiuk, *Sixties Radicals, Then and Now: Candid Conversations With Those Who Shaped the Era* (Jefferson, NC, 1995), 213.

²⁰ Fried, *Nightmare in Red*, 93-94.

For the next four years, “Low-Blow Joe” denounced “left-wing bleeding hearts,” “egg-sucking phony liberals,” and “Communists and queers who sold China into atheistic slavery.” He got ever bolder; no public figure was immune to his attacks. In 1951 for instance, he called Truman a “son-of-a-bitch,” and referred to the Secretary of State as the “Red Dean of Fashion” before implicating General George C. Marshall in a “conspiracy so immense and an infamy so black as to dwarf any previous venture in the history of man.” His downfall came in 1954 after he appeared like a slovenly bully at the Army-McCarthy hearings and the Senate condemned him. At career’s end, McCarthy had accomplished little more than making headlines, frightening people, stoking impassioned hatred, and destroying lives. He never discovered a single Communist that intelligence agencies had not already identified.²¹

McCarthy gave the era its name, but paranoia and hysteria reached an apex between 1949 and 1954 and would have been devastating years for civil liberties even in McCarthy’s absence. Several shocking revelations heightened the sense that the country faced imminent danger from reds outside and within. Czechoslovakia fell to Communists after rebels seized the government with Soviet aid in 1948. In 1949, the Soviets exploded an A-Bomb, closed off access to East Berlin resulting in a U.S. airlift, and China fell to Mao Zedong’s Communist forces. In 1950 Klaus Fuchs, a Manhattan Project scientist, confessed to passing atomic secrets to the Russians; Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were charged with espionage; and in June America went to war with North

²¹ McCarthy quoted in David M. Oshinsky, *A Conspiracy So Immense: The World of Joe McCarthy* (New York, 1983), 197 and J. Ronald Oakley, *God’s Country: America in the Fifties* (New York, 1990), 61-62; John Patrick Diggins, *The Proud Decades: America in War and Peace, 1941-1960* (New York, 1988), 115.

Korea after the Communists moved over the 38th parallel into the South. America went from Red Scared to Red Hysterical. Millions were convinced the nation teemed with Communists. “There are today many Communists in America,” Attorney General J. Howard McGrath warned. “They are everywhere—in factories, offices, butcher stores, on street corners, in private business. And each carries in himself the death of our society.”²²

McGrath’s attitude was typical and the government rushed to restrict Communist activity. The McCarran Internal Security Act of 1950, required “Communist-action” and “front” organizations to register with the Attorney General. Title II endowed the president with the right to detain subversives in camps in the event of a national security crisis. The Bureau of Prisons began converting six old POW and military installations for this purpose in the early fifties, alarming some congressmen. In 1952, congress passed the McCarran-Walter Immigration Act, which established exclusionary measures to keep radical aliens out of the country. Two years later, the Communist Control Act effectively outlawed the Communist Party.²³

Not to be outdone by the feds, state and municipal governments established laws to curb subversion. By 1953, almost 40 states had made it illegal to belong to an organization that advocated a violent change in government. A Connecticut sedition law prohibited criticism of the government, flag, and uniforms of the Armed Services. “Un-American activities” carried with it a three-year prison sentence in Indiana. Life imprisonment awaited those in Michigan who used subversive language and in

²² Fried, *Nightmare in Red*, 119; McGrath quoted in Wittner, *Cold War America*, 86-87.

²³ Fried, *Nightmare in Red*, 117-118.

Tennessee advocating the government's overthrow was punishable by death. Pennsylvania, Georgia, Indiana, and Massachusetts proscribed the Communist Party outright. New York City, Los Angeles, Columbus, Detroit, and other cities enacted anti-subversive laws and instituted loyalty programs.²⁴

Conservatives had long considered the nation's universities and colleges havens for subversives and factories for radical indoctrination; thus, McCarthyism harassed faculties, infringing on academic freedom. Professors could expect little support from the academic establishment as The National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers endorsed the idea that Communists were unfit to teach. Taking the Fifth, espousing controversial opinions, and refusing to testify against colleagues resulted in firings, tenure losses, and probation. Casualties mounted. Kansas State Teachers College sacked a professor for merely putting his name to a petition recommending the release of imprisoned Communists. The Regents fired three professors at the University of Washington, two of whom had tenure; they never worked in academia again. Others were let go at Ohio State, Temple, Columbia, Rutgers, MIT, Michigan, and New York University. The University of California required all professors to take an oath of loyalty, and when 31 refused to sign, the university dismissed them. The state's Supreme Court later nullified the oaths and they got their jobs back. Others were not so fortunate: McCarthyism resulted in the termination of 600 teachers and professors.²⁵

²⁴ Caute, *Great Fear*, 70-72; Fried, *Nightmare in Red*, 109-114.

²⁵ Oakley, *God's Country*, 72; Fried, *Nightmare in Red*, 100-103.

Peter Berg, a member of the San Francisco Mime Troupe and founder of the Diggers, recalled that McCarthyism had a “very chilling effect” on the University of Florida. “The editor of the school newspaper was a McCarthyite,” remembered Berg, “and he tried to get professors to take him home and have drinks and make homosexual advances so they could be kicked out of school. At one blow, we lost about eighty percent of the best professors we ever had . . . Wap!”²⁶

The content of magazines, newspapers, and books reflected an obsession with Communism. Articles appeared with titles such as “Trained to Raise Hell in America: International Lenin School in Moscow,” “Reds Are After Your Child,” “How Communists Take Over,” and “Reds Penetrate Wall Street.” 500 newspapers carried Herbert Philbrick’s serial, *I Was a Communist for the FBI*. Anti-Communist books lined bookshelves—Hamilton Fish’s *The Red Plotters*, Richard Hirsch’s *The Soviet Spies*, and Victor Kravchenko’s *I Chose Freedom*. Americans especially loved Mickey Spillane’s novels in which hero Mike Hammer lays waste to Communists, sexual deviants, pornographers, and other threats to a decent and moral society. In the 1951 novel *One Lonely Night*, Hammer boasts: “I killed more people tonight than I have fingers on my hands. I shot them in cold blood and enjoyed every minute of it . . . They were Commies . . . They were red sons-of-bitches who should have died long ago.”²⁷

Producers made anti-Communist films to appease right-wingers in government and superpatriot American Legionnaires. Hollywood turned out roughly 40 films at the Red Scare’s peak bearing the titles, *The Iron Curtain*, *The Steel Fist*, *I Was a Communist*

²⁶ Chepesiuk, *Sixties Radicals, Then and Now*, 124.

²⁷ Miller and Nowak, *The Fifties*, 28; Mickey Spillane, *One Lonely Night* (New York, 1951), 171.

for the FBI, *The Red Danube*, *The Red Menace*, and *Red Snow*. With small budgets and few stars, most of these productions flopped. *My Son John* epitomized the genre, contrasting God-fearing, wholesome, and patriotic Americans, with effeminate, egg-headed, unprincipled, shady Communists. The plot revolved around the small-town Irish-Catholic Jefferson family. Two of the Jefferson sons are big robust football players and like good Americans, they answer the call-to-arms to fight in Korea. Son John is different, however. He receives a deferment, attends college, and enjoys socializing with his highbrow professors. The film also implies that John is a homosexual, a drug-user, and anti-religious. A Communist spy, John eventually repents, but it is too late—his comrades gun him down on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.²⁸

Years later, hip underground journalists regarded the film's thinly veiled message as propaganda and held it in contempt. "My Son John . . . taught us that drunk legionaires are good teachers and good Americans, while intellectuals are all a bunch of faggot commies" quipped *The Los Angeles Free Press*.²⁹

Ordinary Americans feared the Red Menace and vehemently hated Communists. A 1949 poll revealed that 68 percent of the public would criminalize membership in the Communist Party and 73 percent believed Communists should not be allowed to teach at university. These attitudes did not deviate as citizens held similar views a few years later. A national survey conducted in 1954 showed that 78 percent of respondents favored reporting suspicious neighbors to the FBI, while 42 percent supported

²⁸ Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War*, 133; Miller and Nowak, *The Fifties*, 317-318.

²⁹ Merl Edelman, "Meat and Potatoes," *Los Angeles Free Press*, 15 October 1964.

prohibiting the press from making critical commentary of the nation's form of government.³⁰

Absurd incidents and exploits abounded. In Indiana, a woman advocated the suppression of *Robin Hood* because the “Prince of Thieves” stole from the rich and gave to the poor. “That’s the communist line. It’s just a smearing of law and order.” In Wheeling, West Virginia, city managers had cause for alarm when local children purchased penny-candies with the Soviet Union depicted on the wrapper; an official had the gum dispenser removed. In Mosinee, Wisconsin, American Legionnaires staged a mock coup, educating the locals on the dangers of Communist infiltration and in Illinois they warned that subversives indoctrinated the Girl Scouts. A town in New York required a loyalty oath before fishing in city waters and in Washington, D. C., officials denied a retailers license to a used furniture salesman who had invoked the Fifth Amendment earlier. The Cincinnati Reds baseball team attempted to exhibit its patriotism by officially changing the club’s name to the “Redlegs” before fans turned down the proposal. Patriotic zealots cleared libraries of “dangerous” materials in many cities. Librarians, often coerced, swept *The Daily Worker* from the shelves, but also jettisoned mainstream and less controversial publications like *National Geographic*, *Time*, and *Life*. Books authored by the broad Left and blacks, and those favorable to left-wing causes—civil rights, nuclear disarmament, world peace—were often pulled. So, too, were volumes critical of the government and capitalism.³¹

³⁰ Fried, *Nightmare in Red*, 88; Miller and Nowak, *The Fifties*, 22-23; Whitfield, *Culture of the Cold War*, 14-15.

³¹ Fried, *Nightmare in Red*, 34, 98, 161; Eric F. Goldman, *The Crucial Decade and After: America, 1945-1960* (New York, 1960), 258; Oakley, *God’s Country*, 73-74.

Racist politicians hampered social progress, capitalizing on anti-Communist sentiment to discredit and slow the pace of civil rights. HUAC member and senior Democrat John Rankin of Mississippi claimed in 1950 that Stalin and his Yiddish Politburo had conspired to instigate American civil rights activism. Likewise, Senator James O. Eastland denounced the Supreme Court, conflating the basis of the *Brown* decision with Marxism. Blacks in the South did not think of agitating for rights on their own according to the Senator. “They were put up to it by radical busybodies who are intent upon overthrowing American institutions,” he insisted.³²

Few hippies in the 1960s were Communists of course, but they were steadfast civil libertarians, skeptical of the government, FBI, CIA, and rabid super-patriots. They condemned McCarthyism’s chilling, devastating effects on society. It ruined lives, careers, and trampled civil liberties. Although loyalty programs dispatched some genuine Communists, most casualties—liberals, New Dealers, labor leaders, civil rights activists, atheists, and pacifists—were guilty of nothing more than leaning Left. A stifling atmosphere of paranoia and suspicion, the Red Scare hampered individual freedom as one thought twice about their personal beliefs, whom they associated with, what kind of activities they engaged in, the books they read, the music they listened to, for fear of being branded a subversive.³³

The era cast a long shadow. Some later hippies had experienced the Red Scare’s effects personally. HUAC, for instance, had investigated Country Joe McDonald’s father. As a result, the folk-singer became politically aware at a young age. “I heard

³² Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, 189; Eastland quoted in Fried, *Nightmare in Red*, 176.

³³ Miller and Nowak, *The Fifties*, 26.

protest songs at home,” McDonald recalled, “and I saw left-wing newspapers stories about lynchings and union strikers being shot.” McDonald’s bandmate, Barry Melton, had a similar experience: “I became politically aware at an early age because of the persecution my parents were subjected to in the McCarthy era.” Other cultural and political dissenters in the sixties anxiously braced for a “new McCarthyism” they felt might come as a result of the Vietnam War. They also acknowledged that the Red Scare promoted irrational “hysteria” and “throttled the nation with fear.”³⁴

The Great Fear did eventually recede and a calmer, happier era set in by the mid fifties. Stalin had died, the Korean War had ended, and McCarthy had fallen into disrepute. Americans liked President Eisenhower, a moderate who steered a middle course between the ideologues, preserved the New Deal, and who made them feel at ease. After struggling through the economic hardships of the depression, fighting two wars, and experiencing Cold War anxieties, the time had come to seek security and stability, relax, forget about the Bomb, raise families, and enjoy the good life, while embracing traditional values and religion.³⁵

Nearly everyone celebrated marriage and family. Women went to college to find a husband, preferably a financially stable professional. Males faced pressure to wed early; those who failed to get hitched quickly ran the risk of being labeled a “latent homosexual,” or “emotionally immature.” People married young and started families young. Books and magazines promoted the idea that the stable nuclear family

³⁴ Peter Doggett, *There’s A Riot Going On: Revolutionaries, Rock Stars, and the Rise and Fall of the 60s* (Edinburgh, 2007), 22-23; Ron Chepesiuk, *Sixties Radicals, Then and Now*, 242; Jerry Hopkins, ed., *The Hippie Papers: Trip-Taking, Mind-Quaking, Scene-Making Word From Where it’s at* (New York, 1968), 100-101.

³⁵ Oakley, *God’s Country*, 312-316.

constituted the backbone of a healthy society and trumpeted the importance of “togetherness.” “Whether you are a man or a woman, the family is the unit to which you most genuinely belong,” counseled *The Woman’s Guide to Better Living*. “The family is the center of your living. If it isn’t, you’ve gone far astray.”³⁶

No family could be complete without children and the years following the war witnessed a tremendous growth in births: the baby boom. From 1946 to 1950, women birthed 3.6 million children per year on average, this number rising to the 4 million mark by 1954, and peaking in 1957 at 4.3 million, one birth every seven seconds. In all, between 1946 and 1964, over 76 million babies were born.³⁷

The baby boom coincided with another significant phenomenon: the growth of suburbanization. Federal mortgage guarantees protected builders, facilitating construction. Generous VA and FHA mortgage programs, easy credit, no down payments, and no closing costs boosted homeownership. Critic John Keats called suburbs “fresh air slums” and warned, “while you read this, whole square miles of identical boxes are spreading like gangrene throughout New England, across the Denver prairie, around Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington, New York, Miami—everywhere.” Cynics like Keats failed to deter enthusiastic veterans and professionals who purchased homes in record numbers, taking a significant leap closer to the American Dream. During the fifties, 83 percent of total population growth occurred in the suburbs; nearly 60 million people—a third of all Americans—lived in suburbia by 1960. After

³⁶ Arlene Skolnick, *Embattled Paradise: The American Family in an Age of Uncertainty* (New York, 1991), 53, 71; *Woman’s Guide* quoted in Diggins, *The Proud Decades*, 212.

³⁷ Oakley, *God’s Country*, 119-120.

bulldozing over the land—3,000 acres per day—builders constructed ranch, split-level, and Cape Cod style homes on standardized lots, planted some trees and shrubs and moved on, creating more tract-housing. William Levitt, the Henry Ford of house building, perfected mass construction by preassembling, prefabricating, and precutting the most difficult parts of the homes. Large suburban communities called Levittowns appeared in New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. By 1955, three-quarters of all new housing communities took the form of Levittown-like sub-divisions.³⁸

The people who lived in these large suburban tracts were as uniform as their houses—married, young with young families, middle-class, the men employed as managers, salesmen, businessmen, or skilled craftsmen. And they were overwhelmingly white. In 1957, not a single black lived in Levittown, Pennsylvania. The 82,000 residents in the Long Island Levittown in 1960 were white; no blacks lived there either.³⁹

Television shows “I Love Lucy,” “Leave It To Beaver” and “Father Knows Best,” reinforced and celebrated the ideal of a strong nuclear family. The Nelsons, Cleavers, and Andersons were middle-class suburbanites who were “so completely white and Anglo-Saxon that even the Hispanic gardener in ‘Father Knows Best’ went by the name of Frank Smith.” “The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet” exemplified the quintessential family of the fifties and early sixties. The stable Nelson family teemed with love and trust. Each member conformed neatly to respective roles. Mother Harriet diligently prepared meals in the kitchen, while breadwinning and all-knowing father

³⁸ Oakley, *God's Country*, 112; John Keats, *The Crack in the Picture Window* (Boston, 1956), xi; Miller and Nowak, *The Fifties*, 134; David Halberstam, *The Fifties* (New York, 1993), 131-143; Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier* (New York, 1985), 231-238.

³⁹ Richard Polenberg, *One Nation Divisible: Class, Race, and Ethnicity in the United States Since 1938* (New York, 1980), 162; Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*, 241.

Ozzie went off to his job. Clean-cut and obedient sons, Ricky and David, represented the ideal teenage boys. Despite busy schedules, the Nelson clan always seemed to find quality time to spend together. Nothing very bad or serious ever occurred on these programs.⁴⁰

Conformity flourished in suburbia. Many felt compelled to join political organizations, PTAs, churches, and a variety of clubs. Building codes and social pressure ensured that residents maintained manicured lawns and kept up the appearance of their homes. Suburbanites studied the buying habits of others and in order to “keep up with the Joneses,” they purchased similar cars and clothes. Most expected their neighbors to “fit in.” Those who dared to break the mold in thought and intellect—expressing unconventional opinions or reading too much—might be stamped a highbrow or snob and ran the risk of their social ouster. Skeptics disapproved of the suburbanization trend. Historian and sociologist Lewis Mumford regretted the

multitude of uniform, unidentifiable houses, lined up inflexibly, at uniform distances, on uniform roads, in a treeless communal waste, inhabited by people of the same class, the same income, the same age group, witnessing the same television performances, eating the same tasteless pre-fabricated foods, from the same freezers, conforming in every outward and inward respect to a common mold.⁴¹

In the 1960s, hippies expressed their alienation from the conformity of “up tight straights.” “They feel that every action they do has to conform to a ritual, otherwise it’s not right,” a head contended. “You can’t do anything that’s spontaneous or from

⁴⁰ Stephanie Coontz, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* (New York, 1992), 30; Oakley, *God’s Country*, 118; Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, 351.

⁴¹ Oakley, *God’s Country*, 115-116; Lewis Mumford, *The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformation, and Its Prospects* (New York, 1961), 486.

yourself. You make love like in the toothpaste ad, talk to your children like . . . ‘Father Knows Best.’ . . . they’ve lost the natural ecstasy of living, man.”⁴²

The culture expected that women conform to a common mold of wife, homemaker, and nurturing mother. In a 1955 commencement address to the female graduates of Smith College, Adlai Stevenson advised women to fight the Cold War “in the humble role of housewife—which, statistically, is what most of you are going to be whether you like the idea or not just now—and you’ll like it!” Women had severely limited lifestyle and career choices as colleges prepared them to be the faithful wives of male professionals, ladies who stood behind their organization men. When middle-class women did enter the work force, they took clerical, nursing, and teaching positions. A woman faced attacks if she veered from the confines of the domestic sphere. The 1947 bestseller *The Modern Woman: The Lost Sex*, for instance, referred to feminism as a “deep illness.” Women who pressed for the same opportunities in employment and education, the authors contended, symbolically “castrated” men. Freudian biological theories were influential. An independent woman seeking fulfillment beyond marriage and family exhibited neurosis and “penis envy.” Many women with college degrees, dissatisfied with their lives and longing for something more, turned to prescription drugs and tranquilizers to numb their unhappiness.⁴³

Consensus was as widespread as conformity. The “conservative consensus” or “Eisenhower Consensus” as it was sometimes called, was a prominent feature of Cold

⁴² James T. Carey, *The College Drug Scene* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1968), 50.

⁴³ Adlai Stevenson, “Commencement Address,” in *America in the Sixties—Right, Left, and Center: A Documentary History*, ed. Peter B. Levy (Westport, CT, 1998), 15; Ferdinand Lundberg and Marynia F. Farnham, *Modern Woman: The Lost Sex* (New York, 1947), 143; Coontz, *The Way We Never Were*, 32, 38; Skolnick, *Embattled Paradise*, 69.

War culture. Complacency became pervasive as most agreed that they lived in the greatest nation in the history of man—“God’s Country.” Among politicians, intellectuals, and everyday citizens, consensus prevailed on nearly every issue. In foreign affairs, it was widely believed that America should contain or roll back evil international Communism. Most had faith in the government’s ability to eradicate social problems, supported maintaining the New Deal, and believed in Keynesian economics. Moreover, most thought that capitalism was the fairest and best economic system, that class divisions of the European variety did not apply to America, and that economic growth would continue to eliminate disparities in wealth.⁴⁴

Historians were no exception, stressing consensus and continuity, taking emphasis off various struggles—ideological, class, and sectional—arguing that historical actors had always shared the same fundamental values and outlooks. Textbooks then promulgated these ideas and interpretations at public schools across the nation. Teachers consigned the history of women, racial minorities, and political dissidents to the shadows as captivated students listened to tales of fearless pioneers, captains of industry, and the great white men Teddy Roosevelt, George Custer, and Daniel Boone. Teachers championed the country’s glorious history, stressing that the nation had always been a “melting pot” for various ethnicities and nationalities, that America was the greatest country on earth, that the country was, and always had been, a bastion of freedom and democracy. Each day students dutifully recited the Pledge of Allegiance and in government and civics classes they were instructed to revere the Constitution, Bill of

⁴⁴ Oakley, *God’s Country*, 314-315.

Rights, and Declaration of Independence.⁴⁵

“In Government classes we were taught INDIVIDUALISM, INDIVIDUALISM, INDIVIDUALSIM—till it was coming out of my head,” recalled an Orange County hippie. “Their concept of “INDIVIDUAL”: Ronald Reagan and apple pie.”⁴⁶

Young adults who attended college in the 1950s—the “Silent Generation”—acted and thought like their parents: they maintained the status quo. In college they eagerly joined frats and sororities. Major concerns included looking good and being popular. They did not confront the nation’s festering social problems; the most exciting event on campus was when male students stormed female dorms and stole their underwear in “panty raids.” Before and after graduation, they centered their lives on finding a spouse and securing a high-paying job. This generation did not guard civil liberties, supported book and film censorship, held conservative views on sex, were religious, and conformed to traditional behaviors and conventional thought.⁴⁷

Consensus and conformity made the fifties profoundly conservative. When it came to sex, Americans—on the surface—abided by the dictates of a latter-day Puritanism. Most considered select acts and behaviors—masturbation, homosexuality, abortion, nudism, extra-marital affairs, and frank sex talk—deviant. Citizens generally felt that intercourse should be limited between married, heterosexual couples. State laws attempted to enforce sexual “norms,” many banning oral and anal sex and homosexual behaviors; a few prohibited sex between unwed heterosexuals. Several banned birth

⁴⁵ Peck, *Uncovering the Sixties*, 4; Frances FitzGerald, *America Revised: History Schoolbooks in the Twentieth Century* (Boston, 1979), 8-9; Oakley, *God’s Country*, 318.

⁴⁶ Chester Linderman, “A Lemon in Orange County,” *Indian Head* (Santa Ana, CA), 17 November 1967.

⁴⁷ Diggins, *The Proud Decades*, 203-204; Oakley, *God’s Country*, 286-287.

control devices and some imposed laws restricting adult masturbation. In Indiana, an individual “aiding” or “instigating” a person under the age of 21 to commit “self-pollution,” could be fined up to \$1,000 dollars and serve up to 14 years in prison. Self-imposed censorship codes ensured the words “virgin,” “pregnant,” and “seduction” did not escape the lips of performers on the silver screen and married couples slept in separate beds on television. A long-standing double standard existed for men and women. It was considered “natural” for a man to act on his carnal desires, while women were expected to check male aggressiveness. “Nice” girls did not let “petting” go “too far” or dare “go all the way” for fear of blemishing or losing her “reputation.” And many men desired to marry a virgin—50 percent of male respondents according to an Alfred Kinsey study. Sex education teachers left much to the imagination, limiting discussions to the reproduction process. Young people usually discovered sex on their own, often in the backseat of a car in some remote place or at a drive-in movie. Most Americans were buttoned-down and did not stray from socially established sexual behaviors and mores.⁴⁸

“We were conditioned in self-denial: We were taught that fucking was bad because it was immoral,” reminisced Jerry Rubin in *Do It!* Also in those pre-pill days a knocked-up chick stood in the way of Respectability and Success. We were warned that masturbation caused insanity and pimples We went crazy. We couldn’t hold it back any more.”⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Oakley, *God’s Country*, 302-303; Coontz, *The Way We Never Were*, 40; Beth Bailey, “Sexual Revolution(s),” in *The Sixties*, ed. Farber, 244; Diggins, *The Proud Decades*, 204-205, 207.

⁴⁹ Jerry Rubin, *Do It: Scenarios of Revolution* (New York, 1970), 18.

Censorship was a feature of this era. Declared “obscene” and “damaging” to public morality, the powers-that-be made sure books did not make it to the marketplace. The post office regularly seized D. H. Lawrence’s *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* from the mail, *Lolita* by Vladimir Nabokov was banned from libraries in Cincinnati, and officials often prevented the distribution of Henry Miller’s *Tropic of Cancer* and *Naked Lunch* by William Burroughs.⁵⁰

Growing involvement in religion boosted conservatism. Between 1950 and 1960, church membership burgeoned from 86.8 to 114 million. Bible sales skyrocketed 140 percent between 1949 and 1953 and polls indicated that a growing number of Americans prayed and believed in God and heaven; 95 percent purported to be religious. In addition to the bible, religious books such as Norman Vincent Peale’s *The Power of Positive Thinking* and Catherine Marshall’s *A Man Called Peter* sold well. The government also promoted Christianity. The phrase “Under God” was added to the Pledge of Allegiance and “In God We Trust” was emblazoned on the nation’s currency to distinguish the righteous God-fearing United States from atheistic Communists. “Recognition of the Supreme Being is the first, most basic, expression of Americanism. Without God, there can be no American form of government, nor an American way of life,” Eisenhower proclaimed. Billy Graham and Norman Vincent Peale rose to fame preaching the good word. Many parents believed that religion provided a solid foundation for healthy, upstanding, moral children, and raised them accordingly.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Mark Paxton, *Censorship* (Westport, CT, 2008), 54-55.

⁵¹ Miller and Nowak, *The Fifties*, 86, Eisenhower quoted on p. 85; Oakley, *God’s Country*, 319-327.

Later, in the 1960s, a female seeker recalled being “flogged and frightened” by God. “How tiresome to be constantly told God was going to punish you, to be threatened with a Hell of sulphur and brimstone.”⁵²

But consensus, conformity, and conservatism did not discourage most Americans as more and more families lived the good life. Three-quarters drove at least one car, 70 percent owned a home, and 87 percent owned television sets. Many joined the ranks of the middle-class of which only 31 percent could call themselves in the 1920s; by the mid-1950s, 60 percent had achieved this income status. Between 1945 and 1960, the gross national product increased nearly 250 percent, while per capita income grew by 35 percent. Many had extra cash as discretionary income doubled and real wages rose nearly 30 percent. Multiple factors made this unprecedented prosperity possible: unleashed personal savings that had been pent up during the depression and war; population growth that resulted in the expansion of markets; easy credit; installment plans; federal spending, which kept the economy vibrant; and the G.I. Bill, which was instrumental in sending large numbers of veterans to college, enabling them to secure well paying jobs.⁵³

The good life entailed consumption. Affluence fostered consumerism and materialism. Americans bought things they needed and many more things they did not—homes, cars, kitchen appliances, canned foods, TV dinners, frozen vegetables, paperback books, television sets, high-fidelity stereos, lawn and patio furniture sets, clothing and footwear for every occasion and purpose. And the children, too, acquired

⁵² Jess Stearn, *The Seekers* (Garden City, NY, 1969), 71-72.

⁵³ Coontz, *The Way We Never Were*, 24-25; Oakley, *God's Country*, 228-229.

their share of consumer products—radios, records and record players, guitars, cameras, hula-hoops, Barbies, comic books, skateboards, cowboy outfits, Davy Crockett coonskin caps.

Americans also had more time to enjoy themselves, with greater pay and vacation time. They gathered for block parties and backyard barbecues, played golf, bowled, boated, and attended spectator sports. The well-to-do traveled to Europe on vacation, while families with modest incomes loaded into their automobiles and headed for Disneyland.

Unfortunately, the mid fifties era of repose ended during Eisenhower's second term. Even before Ike's second inaugural, the nation experienced setbacks in foreign relations and affairs. Britain, France, and Israel invaded the Suez region after Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal. Eisenhower pressured Britain, France, and Israel to withdraw, souring America's relations with those countries, while weakening, it seemed, Western unity. At the same time, the Soviet Union crushed an anti-Communist uprising in Hungary. Events also upset domestic tranquility. In 1957, Americans and the world witnessed ugly racism in Little Rock, Arkansas when white mobs prevented nine black students from entering Central High. The students eventually attended classes—under the protection of the 101st Army Airborne. That same year, the Soviets launched a satellite—Sputnik—which renewed fears of nuclear war.⁵⁴

The 1950s with its “little boxes all the same” suburbs, Silent Generation and organization men, crew cuts and gray-flannel, mechanical conformity and unquestioning

⁵⁴ Miller and Nowak, *The Fifties*, 15-16.

masses, censorship, conservatism, materialism, traditional lifestyles and sexual prudery—this was the “plastic” society from which the alienated revolted and from which the counterculture sprung. “We have been raised on TV and in schools (read concentration camps) and have been taught to cut our hair, get a job, go to church, and buy buy buy the fake freedom of owning a stupid looking car, a production-line house, a nice wife our-mom-would-be-proud-of and couple of kids, a washing machine, and a color TV set,” wrote a freak in the sixties. “That ain’t no freedom at all, we said. Fuck that stuff and let’s get us a rock and roll band together.” Boomers used phrases such as “God,” “mother,” “apple pie,” and “the world of Walt Disney,” to succinctly describe their childhood and adolescent experiences. “I cut my eye teeth on Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse,” a Californian recalled. “But even as a kid I figured Donald Duck would make a great Sunday feed and as for Mickey, I was always hoping someone would build a better mousetrap and remove him from our midst.” Female hippies turned against traditional women’s roles at an early age, exhibiting a strong desire to cut loose from white middle-class suburbia. They rebelled by hanging out with wild boys, engaged in delinquent behavior, dated ethnic minorities, frequented folk music clubs or became folk artists, and experimented with dope.⁵⁵

The children of the two-car garage did not look forward to the life that lay ahead of them, dreading the prospect of living a patterned existence, going to college, marrying, securing a 9-to-5 job, having children, two cars, dog and cat, a ranch home in

⁵⁵ Document, Franklin Bach, “Our Music Against the Pig,” Box 17, Folder 21, John and Leni Sinclair Papers, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; John Raymond, “M. Mouse Dies at 65,” *Berkeley Citizen*, 23 December 1966; Lemke-Santangelo, *Daughters of Aquarius*, 35-47.

the sunny suburbs. They earnestly sought to avoid becoming “Mr. Jones”—a traditional Establishment-type character in the Bob Dylan song “Ballad of a Thin Man,” for Mr. Jones “comes home at night, he’s tired—he has a beer, he watches TV, and goes to bed. He gets up the next morning and goes through the same thing.” “Dad was a perfectly nice man,” a Boston dooper told a researcher, “but he was politically conservative, and really straight, and, well, he was just wrapped up in the old money and suburbia possession bag, you know . . . a boring life, just—boring.”⁵⁶

The young studied their environment and then asked themselves: is this all there is? This question produced millions of seekers in the next decade, those who pursued alternative lifestyles, quested for a deeper and more significant existence, strived to discover themselves, experiment with alternative religions and spiritualities, and to have experiences for experience’s sake.

Others were not content with the dominant way of life, either. In the fifties and early sixties, some began to assault the status quo. And the hippies’ origins are partly rooted in these cracks in the consensus.

From the moment Bill Haley sang “Rock Around the Clock” in 1954, a whole generation realized they had something that belonged solely to them, for their parents abhorred rock and roll. Rock’s advent “was the first inkling white teenagers had that they might be a force to be reckoned with, in numbers alone.” Youths found Frank Sinatra’s crooning and sentimental ballads such as Patti Page’s “How Much is that

⁵⁶ Yablonsky, *The Hippie Trip*, 160-161; Harrison Pope, Jr., *Voices From the Drug Culture* (Boston, 1971), 11.

Doggie in the Window?” boring and sterile in comparison to the rollicking pianos, blistering guitars, and thundering drums of rock. Elvis Presley gyrated his hips provocatively, radiating sexuality, singing “don’t you step on my blue suede shoes,” Little Richard screamed “A-wop-bob-a-loom-op-a-lop-bam-boom,” while pounding the ivories, Chuck Berry proclaimed, “hail, hail, rock and roll/deliver me from the days of old,” and Buddy Holly stuttered “My puh-peggy sue” to a booming beat—all to the delight of teenagers and children.⁵⁷

Rock represented something outside the white middle-class mainstream, something new, raw, loud, exciting, and sexual (rock and roll was a euphemism coined by bluesmen for the motions made in bed during intercourse). Moreover, it appealed to the young because it spoke to their concerns and expressed how they perceived their surroundings and environment. It symbolized a protest against the adult world, adult values, and adult music. For many, music is nothing more than a form of amusement to be listened to in the car, while performing chores, or put on for ambience at a party. This was not so for most of the men and women who became the counterculture. Individuals react differently to various stimuli. Hippies saw rock as a medium for spreading messages or good vibes, but there was more to it than that. They ascribed to it great power and potential (in the sixties, hippies talked frequently of rock’s revolutionary qualities). The new sounds marked the beginning of the sixties era for many; the counterculture maintained that rock and roll, from its inception, possessed the power to liberate the body and soul and promoted a sense of community. Jerry Rubin

⁵⁷ Lillian Roxon, *Rock Encyclopedia* (New York, 1978), 241.

expressed these sentiments in 1970, writing, “Elvis Presley ripped off Ike Eisenhower by turning our uptight young awakening bodies around. Hard animal rock energy beat/surged hot through us, the driving rhythm arousing repressed passions. Music to free the spirit. Music to bring us together.”⁵⁸

Youths tuned to crackling, distant radio stations at the far end of the dial late at night to hear distinctively black urban and rural sounds, and at a time when racism and segregation flourished, listening to black music or cavorting with blacks and black culture smacked of rebellion. Rock’s roots in African rhythms alarmed the guardians of morality, the defenders of segregation, and champions of America’s Anglo-Saxon heritage. Adult outrage and consternation made rock and roll all the more enticing to youth. A 1956 editorial in *Music Journal* contended that teenagers were

definitely influenced in their lawlessness by this throwback to jungle rhythms. Either it actually stirs them to orgies of sex and violence (as its model did for the savages themselves), or they use it as an excuse for the removal of all inhibitions and the complete disregard of the conventions of decency.

The Citizens’ Council of Greater New Orleans, a white supremacist organization, expressed similar views, circulating flyers that read: “DON’T BUY NEGRO RECORDS The screaming, idiotic words, and savage music of these records are undermining the morals of our white youth in America.”⁵⁹

Rock music raised concerns among adults and so did unruly juveniles.

“Greasers” wore pegged pants, sported DA (duck’s ass) haircuts, guzzled beer, smoked dope, blasted “race records,” and had sex with their “loose” girlfriends. They inherited

⁵⁸ Carl Belz, *The Story of Rock* (New York, 1972), 31; Rubin, *Do It*, 18; See Ed Ward, Geoffrey Stokes, and Ken Tucker, *Rock of Ages: The Rolling Stone History of Rock and Roll* (New York, 1986) for rock’s early history.

⁵⁹ Robert Palmer, *Rock and Roll: An Unruly History* (New York, 1995), 51-52.

the language of black hipsters, criminals, and the Beats—dig, cool, chick, pusher, and reefer—words that wound up in the hippies’ linguistic repertoire. Juvies modeled themselves after alienated rebels like James Dean in *Rebel Without a Cause* and Marlon Brando in *The Wild One*: “What are you rebelling against Johnny? “Whadda ya got?” Kids rioted, caught up in a rock and roll frenzy while viewing *The Blackboard Jungle*. Teen gangs clashed in city streets; other delinquents stole cars and went on “joy rides.” The FBI reported that police arrested teens for half of all murders, beatings, and sexual assaults and half of all burglaries and robberies. Social guardians blamed the problem on comic books and violent films. Some are never satisfied with the world they have inherited and alienated youths moved from subculture to subculture as they grew older. Rebels of the fifties became rebels in the sixties. Abbie Hoffman hung around pool halls with a juvenile delinquent gang after getting thrown out of school. Likewise, Peter Berg roved the streets of Miami with a violent group of “hillbilly” outcasts as an adolescent.⁶⁰

The Beats represented dissent better than all others. Most knew little to nothing of them. That changed on October 7, 1955 at San Francisco’s Six Gallery, when Allen Ginsberg unleashed his rage with *Howl*:

I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness, starving
hysterical naked,
dragging themselves through the negro streets at dawn looking for an angry
fix,
angelheaded hipsters burning for the ancient heavenly connection to the
starry dynamo in the machinery of night . . .

Later in the reading, as Jack Kerouac yelled “go” from offstage, Ginsberg took aim at

⁶⁰ Diggins, *The Proud Decades*, 201; Abbie Hoffman, *Woodstock Nation* (New York, 1969), 22, 24; Wolf, *Voices From the Love Generation*, 251-252.

America's prisons, military, bombs, suburbs, Congress, and sexual stuffiness, declaring it all, "Moloch! Solitude! Filth! Ugliness!"⁶¹

Others shared Ginsberg's discontent. Gregory Corso, Gary Snyder, Robert Duncan, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, William Burroughs, and Jack Kerouac detested 1950s Cold War culture, its complacency, sexual repression, and silent generation. They questioned authority and the dominant religion—McCarthyites, the CIA, Christianity. The Beats established communities in Greenwich Village in New York, the North Beach district of San Francisco, and in Denver, Boston, New Orleans, Berkeley, and Philadelphia. They preferred dark clothing, grew beards and goatees, valued spontaneity, reveled in the be-bop jazz of Charlie "Bird" Parker, crossed the country in flat-bed pickups and Cadillacs, mingled in cities with blacks and the poor with whom they associated authenticity, smoked marijuana, popped pills, and swilled booze. Sexually permissive, they engaged in orgies and indulged in interracial and homosexual relationships. And they disliked everything conventional, including mainstream entertainment and boring occupations.

Like the Beats, social philosophers assailed the ills of modernity. In his 1964 book, *One-Dimensional Man*, Herbert Marcuse urged his readers to practice the "Great Refusal," to resist being dominated and manipulated by consumerism, abundance, and technology. Earlier, he had published *Eros and Civilization*. In this 1955 work, Marcuse combined Marx and Freud to argue that industrialized society, concerned with maintaining the Protestant work ethic, had become totalitarian, forcing unnecessary

⁶¹ Allen Ginsberg, *Collected Poems, 1947-1980* (New York, 1988), 126-132.

sexual repression on its people. Upon the elimination of this repression, Eros would be freed, resulting in unbridled sex and happiness. Norman O. Brown, too, wanted to liberate Eros. *Life Against Death*, published in 1959, argued that man repressed his animal instincts. Brown called for a “polymorphous perversity,” a Freudian term, which entailed pansexualism and a rejection of Western civilization’s sexual conduct—straight, monogamous, genital intercourse. He also wrote about discovering the unconscious, creating the “Dionysian Ego,” where one could discover unlimited love and pleasure. Sociologist Paul Goodman also offered scathing critiques of society. His *Growing Up Absurd*, published in 1961, focused on alienated youngsters, teenagers and juveniles who came of age in a meaningless society with no legitimate models to follow, no satisfying roles to look forward to. Goodman contended that the corporate, technocratic, consumer culture produced pervasive spiritual emptiness.

Others dented the status-quo. Holden Caulfield exemplified alienated youths, railing against adults and their “phoniness” in J. D. Salinger’s 1951 novel, *Catcher in the Rye*. Joseph Heller’s 1961 book *Catch-22* derided the government, military, patriotism, and the madness of war. The following year, Ken Kesey’s *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* appeared. In this novel, wisecracking, free-spirited, R. P. McMurphy leads his fellow mental hospital patients against the authoritarian head nurse, Miss Ratched. The novel’s message: “people need to get back in touch with their world, to open doors of perception, to enjoy spontaneous sensuous experience and resist . . . manipulative forces.” In entertainment, black humorists Lenny Bruce and Mort Sahl assaulted mainstream values and exposed cultural hypocrisy, while *Mad Magazine* mocked

advertising, movies, television shows, suburbia, and the military.⁶²

Gauging the impact of these fractures presents a formidable task. To be sure, philosophers and novelists inspired some budding flower children who shared and acted out their ideas, but others did not know of Lenny Bruce or read much. Even when they did pick up a book or magazine, the printed page did not possess the power to alter their frame of mind, induce them to smoke marijuana, grow their hair long, join a commune, or journey to a hippie enclave. When a young woman was asked if she had traveled to Haight-Ashbury because of something she had read, she answered no. “I never read anything that made me become this way or that way.” Books likely confirmed for the alienated what they already knew: war was evil and destructive; they were sexually repressed; society was rife with hypocrisy; they were not free. “Paul Goodman . . . and all other social scientists concerned with the alienation of youth . . . can only write books notionally about what each of us in the Pepsi Generation knows experientially,” explained a Boston draft resister.⁶³

The Beats did have a tremendous influence on some who became cultural dissidents. Bob Dylan read *Howl* and Ferlinghetti’s *Coney Island of the Mind* before departing the University of Minnesota in 1961 to live in Greenwich Village. As a young poet and artist, Jim Morrison of the Doors found *On the Road* fascinating. John Sinclair, founder of the White Panthers, read Ginsberg in college. The Beats—Neal Cassidy in particular—made a major impact on Ken Kesey’s personality and writing. San

⁶² Stephen L. Tanner, *Ken Kesey* (Boston, 1983), 18.

⁶³ Wolf, *Voices From the Love Generation*, 154; Tom Jarrell, “Confessions of a Two-Time Draft Card Burner,” *Avatar* (Boston), 2-15 February 1968.

Francisco hippie heavies Ron Thelin, Steve Levine, Peter Berg, and Peter Coyote all read Beat literature and a few founders of underground newspapers had Beat associations. All these individuals had one thing in common: they were born before and during World War II, and therefore impressionable adolescents or adults at the apogee of the Beat renaissance. Many had been Beats in the mid fifties or immersed in the Beat scene as it waned in the early sixties. A few years later, they became hippies. Ginsberg, Kerouac, and Burroughs, had helped youth to make sense of the insanity that surrounded them.⁶⁴

But the Beats influenced the baby-boomers—who made up the majority of the counterculture—to a lesser degree. After all, the oldest of the generation were only nine when Ginsberg read *Howl* at Six Gallery and eleven when Kerouac published *On the Road*, hardly an age where they could read, dissect, and comprehend these sophisticated works. Most probably read Kerouac and Ginsberg years after their books first appeared in print, when they were in the process of dropping out, or after they had already done so. But others were never avid readers. In an interview with the Detroit underground *The Fifth Estate*, Allen Ginsberg appraised the power of his poetry. Reading, he felt, had declined. If people paid attention to poetry at all, Ginsberg maintained, they listened to it through music, the songs of the Beatles and Bob Dylan in particular. He also flatly

⁶⁴ Dylan in Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, 410 and Howard Sounes, *Down the Highway: The Life of Bob Dylan* (New York, 2001), 63; Morrison in Gitlin, *The Sixties*, 52; John Sinclair interview in Allan Katzman, ed., *Our Time: An Anthology of Interviews From the East Village Other* (New York, 1972), 190; Tanner, *Ken Kesey*, 137-144; San Francisco hippies in Wolf, *Voices From the Love Generation*, 41-45, 123, 217, 250; Abe Peck, *Uncovering the Sixties*, 38.

denied that his poetry created “social awareness.”⁶⁵

This is not to argue that the Beats had no effect on baby-boomers. They foreshadowed the counterculture with their spontaneous, liberated, hedonistic lifestyles, their interest in alternative spiritualities like Zen Buddhism and Hinduism, and their love of intimate communities. Most hippies were aware that the Beats had preceded their movement, noting the similarities in how they had attacked the consensus, conformity, and repressiveness of Cold War society.

Yet there are important distinctions to be made between the two phenomena as their characteristics differed. “Beat was dark, silent, moody, lonely, sad—and its music was jazz,” a researcher observed, while “Hippie is bright, vivacious, ecstatic, crowd-loving, joyful—and its music is rock. Beat was the *Lonely Crowd*; hippie, the crowd that tired of being lonely.” Underground journalists recognized these differences, rightfully calling *On the Road* the “bible” for the Beats, while neglecting to assess its meaning for the “flower generation,” or the “hopeful generation.”⁶⁶

Some Beats maintained a presence within the counterculture. Ginsberg, Snyder, Ferlinghetti, and Michael McClure participated in be-ins and other events. But Burroughs spent most of the sixties in Europe and Jack Kerouac did not know what to make of the new brand of counterculturalists. In the summer of 1964, Neal Cassady—the famed Dean Moriarty of *On the Road*—arranged a meeting between Kerouac and proto-hippie Ken Kesey and his Merry Pranksters. The flashing lights, tape noises, and

⁶⁵ Mitchell Goodman, ed., *The Movement Toward a New America: (A Collage), A What?* (New York, 1970), 522-523.

⁶⁶ Wolf, *Voices From the Love Generation*, xxi; “Moriarty Lives!,” *Open City Press*, 6-12 December 1964; “End of the Road,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 16-22 February 1968.

an American flag draped sofa unsettled Kerouac. Kerouac folded up the flag and asked if Kesey and his group were Communists. He and Kesey had little to say to each other and Kerouac left the party early. Writer Tom Wolfe saw this meeting as symbolic, a “hail and farewell.” “Kerouac was the old star. Kesey was the wild new comet from the West heading Christ knew where.” A torch had been passed.⁶⁷

Historians have overemphasized and overestimated the Beats’ influence on the counterculture. They never numbered more than a few thousand and a mere 150 wrote anything. By 1961, they had been broken up and scattered in San Francisco, the victims of police harassment. Their neighborhood in North Beach became a tourist trap. In 1965, latter-day Beats looked down on the “imitation bohemians”—“hippie” meant “junior grade hipster.” Most Beats disregarded the hippies because the new counterculturalists wasted time getting high and having fun.⁶⁸

The counterculture functioned full-throttle under its own power, without the assistance of Beats as sages or guideposts. Ginsberg himself dismissed the idea that he occupied “a special position” within the “movement” as “a lot of crap.” The counterculture’s nature militated against the rise of prominent leaders. By the late sixties, it was decentralized and widely dispersed throughout the country; no hierarchy or epicenter existed from which to coordinate and direct it. Furthermore, anarchistic impulses drove the counterculture. Hippies generally distrusted would-be mentors, centralized authority, large structured organizations, and mass political movements. “Be

⁶⁷ Martin A. Lee and Bruce Shlain, *Acid Dreams: The Complete Social History of LSD: The CIA, the Sixties, and Beyond* (New York, 1985), 123; Tom Wolfe, *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (New York, 1968), 103.

⁶⁸ Ned Polsky, *Hustlers, Beats, and Others* (Chicago, 1967), 178; Perry, *Haight-Ashbury*, 5.

your own leader,” a Digger advised and longhairs agreed, “doing their own thing” without regard to what others did.⁶⁹

Although rock and rollers, juveniles, Beats, and dissident writers had challenged the consensus, they failed to substantially alter it, making ripples, not waves; fissures, not gaping craters. When the sixties dawned, the Silent Generation remained silent and the vast majority of young adults prepared for a traditional life. Men expected to be providers; women homemakers. Few had the temerity to question the status quo. This changed when youths got excited about the possibility of transforming their country and the world. The college population tripled from 1960 to 1972, from three to ten million and the first of the massive baby-boom generation arrived at universities in 1964. The youth stratum of society now possessed the potential to become a major social and political force.

The immediate post-war era had put future freaks on an alienation trajectory and this alienation accelerated rapidly in the early sixties. Most historians have treated the New Left and counterculture as separate entities. This is understandable because they did, initially, represent distinct camps. Scholars tend to posit different origins for both phenomena—Beat trendsetters, the arrival of LSD, black hipsters, affluence, and permissive child-rearing for the counterculture—segregation, poverty, Establishment liberalism, the arms race, and other impetuses for the New Left. This traditional interpretation overlooks the reality that hippies did not come of age in a vacuum, isolated from the forces that engaged their political, activist counterparts. Jim Crow and racism,

⁶⁹ Katzman, *Our Time*, 115-116; Wolf, *Voices From the Love Generation*, 120.

the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the military-industrial complex, and the bloated and bureaucratized multiversity, alarmed, angered, discouraged, and disillusioned future freaks. Hippies and New Leftists shared similar grievances; their reactions to these issues, however, eventually diverged—sharply.

Some of those who became hippies engaged in New Left activism. These New Leftists had epiphanies at some point: protest accomplished little. Hip entrepreneur Chet Helms participated in civil rights and joined Students for Direct Action (SDA) at the University of Texas before realizing that “confrontational demonstrations were fruitless.” Likewise, Rock Scully, manager of the Grateful Dead, spent two years with the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and served jail time prior to deciding that he “served no real purpose” in demonstrations. San Francisco Mime Troupe member and founding Digger Peter Coyote protested the arms race. He and his friends stopped attending classes, fearing the end of the world during the Cuban Missile Crisis. He traveled to Washington and picketed the White House. Kennedy invited Coyote and others in for a meeting after learning of the demonstration. Once inside, they met McGeorge Bundy. “Bundy looked like a chameleon. His eyes were the coldest, most analytical I had ever seen,” Coyote remembered. The brief encounter impacted him greatly. Coyote thought to himself, “Nothing I say is going to change his [Bundy’s] mind. Neither am I going to affect anything by picketing in the streets and carrying a sign That’s when I began to think about culture as opposed to

politics.”⁷⁰

Much of later longhairs’ alienation stemmed from the horrid treatment of African-Americans. Blacks in the South lived under Jim Crow. Institutions were segregated—schools, hospitals, prisons, homes for the mentally disabled and blind, and so were public facilities—restaurants, theaters, buses, drinking fountains, zoos, beaches, swimming pools, and ball parks. Even in death, equality escaped blacks as they buried their loved ones in segregated cemeteries. They possessed little to no political power; white Southerners deprived blacks of the vote, instituting literacy tests, good character clauses, and poll taxes. In the South, most whites believed, unquestionably, that “niggers” stank, were inferior, lazy, and stupid. African-Americans were also the victims of extreme acts of brutality. Between 1889 and 1946, white mobs lynched almost 4,000 men, women, and children. Blacks fared little better in the North where De facto segregation was prevalent and blacks sent their children to separate and underfunded schools. Whites fled the cities for the suburbs as blacks migrated North. Moreover, destitution plagued the African-American community. Over 50 percent of two-parent and one-parent black households lived below the poverty line.⁷¹

Racism angered the young, disturbing their egalitarian sensibilities. The “Land of the Free” had disenfranchised African-Americans, instituting near slavery in the form of Jim Crow. Many whites disagreed with Thomas Jefferson’s eminent phrase in the

⁷⁰ Gene Anthony, *Magic of the Sixties* (Layton, Utah, 2004), 134; Nicholas Von Hoffman, *We Are the People Our Parents Warned Us Against* (Chicago, 1968), 22; Chepesiuk, *Sixties Radicals, Then and Now*, 258-259.

⁷¹ Joel Williamson, *A Rage For Order: Black-White Relations in the American South Since Emancipation* (New York, 1986), 85; C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (New York, 1955), 97-109; Harvard Sitkoff, *The Struggle For Black Equality, 1954-1992* (New York, 1993), 3-36; Oakley, *God’s Country*, 188; Coontz, *The Way We Never Were*, 30.

Declaration of Independence: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.” America failed to live up to the ideals established in its founding documents, documents the young had been taught to admire and respect. “God didn’t create ‘niggers,’ white men did,” opined a Minnesota college student. “This is a country with so little compassion for its black people that police dogs and Ku Klux Klan beatings . . . are needed to ‘shock’ it into doing something,” the *Berkeley Barb* editorialized. “Don’t they understand that most black parents want the same things for their children that white parents want for theirs—clean clothes; good housing; good food; a good education; a good job.” The segregated bathrooms and drinking fountains Grateful Dead guitarist Jerry Garcia witnessed while passing through the South in the summer of 1964 stunned and overwhelmed him.⁷²

The stations of African-Americans, however, had improved. The federal government had taken some action. An executive order by Truman desegregated the armed services in 1948 and the Supreme Court struck down segregation in public schools with the *Brown* decision in 1954. James Meredith enrolled at Ole Miss after federal troops, national guardsmen, and government agents clashed with an angry white mob. Blacks also entered the University of Alabama after President John Kennedy federalized the National Guard.

But activist African-Americans and their white allies advanced equality even more with the advent of the civil rights movement. It began with the Montgomery bus

⁷² Chuck Gustafson, “Straight Up and Down,” *The Free Statesman* (St. Cloud, MN), 21 September 1967; Dave Lee, “Editorial—Who Will Lead?” *Berkeley Barb*, 20 August 1965; Dennis McNally, *A Long Strange Trip: The Inside History of the Grateful Dead* (New York, 2002), 70-71.

boycott in December 1955, and gained momentum when young activists, tired of their apathetic elders, participated in direct action and civil disobedience protests with the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). Activists made considerable progress with the Greensboro sit-ins in 1960, Freedom Rides in 1961, and voter registration work in the deep South. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) remained active, initiating and leading the Birmingham Campaign in 1963, where Eugene "Bull" Connor's police forces attacked demonstrators with German Shepherds and high-pressure fire hoses. King also led the March on Washington the same year, and a trek from Selma to Montgomery Alabama in 1965. President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. These monumental laws had come at great cost, however, as racist mobs beat, knifed, bombed, assassinated, and murdered activists, movement leaders, and innocent children. White brutality deeply disturbed soon-to-be hippies. When Peter Berg sat-in at a department store in Richmond, he watched German Shepherds attack and rip the clothes from young black females.⁷³

Later longhairs participated in the struggle for black equality. Bob Dylan befriended members of SNCC, sang for black farmers outside Greenwood, Mississippi, and performed at the March on Washington. Jefferson Poland, founder of the Sexual Freedom League, registered black voters in Louisiana, and Barry Melton of Country Joe and the Fish joined CORE as a volunteer. Art Kunkin, founder of the *Los Angeles Free*

⁷³ Chepesiuk, *Sixties Radicals, Then and Now*, 125.

Press, had also been a member of CORE in the late forties.⁷⁴

While the civil rights movement was underway, students assailed the remnants of McCarthyism. On May 13, 1960 activists demonstrated against HUAC at San Francisco City Hall. After authorities denied 100 activists admission to the hearings, protestors sat down in the rotunda and began singing “We Shall Not Be Moved,” before police knocked them down the steps of the building with clubs and fire hoses. The next day 5,000 students returned, taunting HUAC with chants of “Sieg Heil.” “The whole fuckup in our society probably had political origins,” stated a longhair who participated in the demonstration before moving about the hippie community in the late sixties.⁷⁵

Even more alarming than HUAC was the specter of nuclear annihilation—the end of days. The superpowers would eventually accumulate enough nuclear weapons to destroy the world several times over. As children and young adults, the sixties generation participated in “duck-and-cover” drills, cowering under their desks, while others watched their parents construct bomb shelters. Not every citizen, however, feared the use of weapons of mass destruction; on the contrary, many favored it. A 1949 Gallop poll indicated that 70 percent of Americans opposed the government’s commitment to “no first use” of nukes. Another 1951 poll revealed that over half favored dropping atom bombs on Korea. In 1954, Richard Nixon, John Foster Dulles, and Admiral Arthur W. Radford advocated striking the Viet Minh with three nukes

⁷⁴ Robert Shelton, *No Direction Home: The Life and Music of Bob Dylan* (New York, 1986), 149, 170, 179; David Allyn, *Make Love Not War: The Sexual Revolution: An Unfettered History* (Boston, 2000), 44; Chepesiuk, *Sixties Radicals, Then and Now*, 244; Dave McBride, “Counterculture,” in *A Companion To Los Angeles*, ed. William Deverell and Greg Hise (Oxford, 2010), 329.

⁷⁵ Lytle, *America’s Uncivil Wars*, 73; Gitlin, *The Sixties*, 82; Rorabaugh, *Berkeley at War*, 16; Wolf, *Voices From the Love Generation*, 64.

during the siege at Dien Bien Phu.⁷⁶

Teens discussed the Bomb in suburbia in the late fifties:

“When the atomic bomb falls, you and your ideals will be nothing but crudeness on the ground. What good are you when you’re dead?” a beatnik teen asked his friend, an ROTC cadet.

“The bomb’s going to fall on you, too,” shouted the cadet, his voice cracking with frustration. “At least I’m trying to do something about it. What are you doing?”

“Nothing,” the beatnik replied. “All I can do is sit and fold my hands and hope I’ve got the guts to wait there and take it.”⁷⁷

Inspired by civil rights activists, students and others demonstrated against the arms race. After the Soviets launched Sputnik in 1957, socialists and pacifists of the Old Left established the Committee for Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE). In the spring of 1960, 1,000 Harvard students demonstrated for disarmament. In May 1960, 20,000 attended a SANE rally at Madison Square Garden agitating for an end to the arms race and a test ban treaty. The same month, students at New York’s City University (CCNY) protested air raid drills. In 1961, Harvard and Brandeis students organized a march on Washington to demonstrate for peace and to push President John F. Kennedy away from hawks in the Democratic Party.

Future counterculturalists protested the arms race. Huw “Piper” Williams, founder of commune Tolstoy Farm, was a member of the Committee for Nonviolent Action (CNVA). *Berkeley Barb* editor Max Scherr organized picketing of the Atomic

⁷⁶ Whitfield, *Culture of the Cold War*, 5-7.

⁷⁷ Quoted in Bibi Wein, *The Runaway Generation* (New York, 1970), 52.

Energy Commission. East Village counterculturalist Ed Sanders protested by climbing aboard Polaris submarines. “No matter how much of a dooper, a weirdo, a wild poet,” he remembered, “you could get a sense of righteous indignation and demand that they stop testing in the atmosphere—and then, some people would say, ban all weapons.”⁷⁸

The Cuban Missile Crisis exacerbated fear and anxiety. The United States and Soviet Union had come to the brink of a nuclear arms exchange before narrowly averting disaster. A few frightened New England students drove to Canada, while others at Cornell, Indiana, Minnesota, Michigan, and Wisconsin protested Kennedy’s handling of the crisis. A schism in attitudes towards the arms race developed. Most parents gave thanks to the Bomb, believing it had brought World War II to a decisive end, saving countless lives. Their children saw it differently. Todd Gitlin remarked:

Rather than feel grateful for the Bomb, we felt menaced. The Bomb was the shadow hanging over all human endeavor. It threatened all prizes. It might, if one thought about it radically, undermine the rationale of the nation-state. It might also throw the traditional religious and ethical justifications for existence into disarray, if not disrepute.⁷⁹

In the Midwest and in Northern California, students published newsletters, newspapers, and pamphlets voicing their concerns. “We are living in an age of insanity. Nothing is immune to the sickness. Party, pulpit and press, far from being above the plague, are participants in its spread,” wrote a student at the University of Wisconsin. The extermination of millions had become “acceptable as television, Coca-Cola and tranquilizers.” The writer lamented that, “Preservation of civilization has become

⁷⁸ Lytle, *America’s Uncivil Wars*, 72, 82-83; Anderson, *Movement and the Sixties*, 58; Miller, *The 60s Communes*, 23; Lawrence Leamer, *The Paper Revolutionaries: The Rise of the Underground Press* (New York, 1972), 30; Sanders quoted in Peck, *Uncovering the Sixties*, 15.

⁷⁹ Anderson, *Movement and the Sixties*, 69; Gitlin, *The Sixties*, 23.

equated with destruction, as men face reality by burrowing into the earth. Life has become death. Peace means war. Defense means retaliation.” Worst of all, leaders accepted the arms race as inevitable, even desirable, shouting “Amen.” Anxiety over a potential apocalypse continued into the late sixties. “Assuming that human nature is not going to change over night, how long can we stand on the brink of all out nuclear war without falling in? Five Years? Ten Years?” a Californian wondered.⁸⁰

Folk singers addressed the social issues that concerned youth—racism, Jim Crow, and growing nuclear arsenals. Folk music had been popular during the depression among unionists, socialists, and Communists, but it became marginalized after McCarthyites attacked its supposedly subversive social and political commentary. The early sixties witnessed a folk music revival. College students crowded into coffee houses to talk politics and to hear folkies sing. Folkniks considered their music authentic, meaningful, and honest. Phil Ochs, Joan Baez, Ramblin’ Jack Elliot, Judy Collins, the Chad Mitchell and Kingston Trios, the Brothers Four, the Freedom Singers, Highwaymen, and Tom Paxton became popular and folkniks rediscovered veteran artists Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, and the Weavers.

The Chad Mitchell Trio’s “Alma Mater,” Tom Paxton’s “Dogs of Alabama,” and Phil Ochs’s “Here’s to the State of Mississippi” assailed racial injustice and Jim Crow. Tom Paxton’s “That’s What I Learned in School” attacked militarism, the government, and politicians:

I learned that Washington never told a lie,

⁸⁰ “Age of Insanity,” *Sanity* (Madison, WI), Winter 1962; “Survival: How to Exist After World War III,” *The Paper* (Mendocino, CA), June 1966.

I learned that soldiers seldom die,
I learned that everybody's free
I learned our government must be strong
It's always right and never wrong
Our leaders are the finest men
And so we elect them again and again

Phil Ochs wrote "Talking Cuban Crisis" about the averted apocalypse and "Too Many Martyrs" about the assassination of Medger Evers. Malvina Reynolds' "Little Boxes," decried the conformity and sameness of suburbia. The folk scene was especially vibrant in Greenwich Village in New York where guitar-playing Beat-folkies played at clubs and coffee houses and read the magazines *Sing Out!* and *Broadside*. The revival reached its peak in 1963 and 1964 when *Look*, *Life*, *Time*, and *Playboy* featured stories on folk, ABC launched the program *Hootenanny*, and tens of thousands attended the Berkeley and Newport Folk Festivals, both of which brought in large revenues. Many folkniks gravitated toward the counterculture after the folk craze fizzled. Iconic rock bands and artists the Byrds, Quicksilver Messenger Service, Country Joe and the Fish, Jefferson Airplane, Janis Joplin, and Bob Dylan emerged from the folk tradition.⁸¹

Cultural and political dissidents began publishing underground newspapers, a deliberate counter to the mainstream press that favored the Establishment. Undergrounds attempted to set the record straight on politics, culture, and foreign policy, to feature stories that mattered to beatniks and activists. The *Daily Worker*, the *Militant*, *National Guardian*, *Monthly Review*, *I. F. Stone's Weekly*, *Liberation*, the *Progressive*,

⁸¹ Anderson, *Movement and the Sixties*, 94; David Pichaske, *A Generation in Motion: Popular Music and Culture in the Sixties* (New York, 1979), 55-60; R. Serge Denisoff, *Great Day Coming: Folk Music and the American Left* (Urbana, IL, 1979), 164-189.

and the *Village Voice* had long appealed to Communist, socialist, and liberal readers. But the first proto-underground of consequence for the young became available in 1958 with Paul Krassner's the *Realist*, which provided outrageous satire that poked fun at Cold War politics and culture. In February 1962, in the East Village, Ed Sanders declared, "I'll print anything," and founded another proto-underground—*Fuck You: A Magazine of the Arts*—dedicated to "Pacifism, unilateral disarmament . . . non-violent resistance . . . anarchy . . . the LSD communarium . . . amyl nitrate sniffings . . . butt fuckings and group-gropes." The first of the major Sixties undergrounds emerged after Art Kunkin established *Faire Free Press* in May 1964, which later became the *Los Angeles Free Press*. Kunkin pitched his paper to a white middle class seeking to break from the confines of American traditionalism—bohemians, homosexuals, students, and radicals. Other papers came into existence, albeit briefly. John Bryan founded *Open City Press* in San Francisco in November 1964 and little magazines such as *Spider*, *Wooden Shoe*, and *Root and Branch* published briefly during the Free Speech Movement.⁸²

In the mid sixties, unrest began to surface as students engaged in political activism, asserting their rights. Student government at Cornell abolished mandatory ROTC training in 1962. At Indiana, students convinced the University to cast aside limitations on political speech, and in the spring of 1964 hundreds of Brandeis students demonstrated against dorm visitation restrictions.⁸³

⁸² Peck, *Uncovering the Sixties*, 3-15, 29; Sanders quoted on p. 15; Leamer, *The Paper Revolutionaries*, 28.

⁸³ Lytle, *America's Uncivil Wars*, 169.

But the largest indication of student unrest occurred at UC-Berkeley in the fall of 1964. The Free Speech Movement (FSM) began when the dean issued a proclamation banning the dissemination of political material on the twenty-six foot sidewalk off of Sproul Plaza that led to the entrance of campus. Administrators likely instituted the ban because radicals and beatniks lingered around the area. Inspired by the non-violent civil disobedience tactics of the civil rights movement, demonstrations followed for nearly four months. Students occupied the administration building, held rallies attracting thousands, and gave rousing speeches. Campus activity grinded to a halt and police made almost 800 arrests before administrators and students resolved the conflict.⁸⁴

The movement certainly pertained to free speech, but something more serious unsettled the demonstrators: they were unwillingly becoming a part of a “machine.” Inquiring students discovered passages in president Clark Kerr’s “The Uses of the University,” and believed they had deciphered its real significance. Soon UC-Berkeley would be similar to other business enterprises, advancing and entrenching the Cold War, the space race, and the status quo. Faculty and administrators acted as managers, students the managed. The multiversity was the “New Slavery,” “knowledge factories” where students had become “a number on a set of file cards that go through an IBM machine.” FSM leader Mario Savio indicted the university for using students as “raw materials” and insisted that students resist:

There’s a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart, that you can’t take part, you can’t even tacitly take part. And you’ve got to put your body upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus, and you’ve got to make it stop. And you’ve got to

⁸⁴ Ibid.

indicate to the people who run it, the people who own it, that unless you're free, the machine will be prevented from working at all.

As individuals, students demanded that administrators respect their humanity. A striker carried a placard that expressed this sentiment well: "I Am A UC Student: Do Not Fold, Spindle, or Mutilate."⁸⁵

Students involved in the FSM partook in the same activities and held the same worldview as the nascent counterculture. FSM involved social dropouts, those who usually hung around campus and took a class from time to time. Journalist Hunter S. Thompson described the social radicals on the periphery of campus:

Social radicals tend to be "arty." Their gigs are poetry and folk music, rather than politics, although many are fervently committed to the civil rights movement. Their political bent is Left, but their real interests are writing, painting, good sex, good sounds and free marijuana. The realities of politics put them off, although they don't mind lending their talents to a demonstration here and there, or even getting arrested for a good cause.

The night that students occupied Sproul Hall, some smoked marijuana and some made love on the roof. Half the members of the FSM steering committee had used dope. A woman who had participated in civil rights, joined the New Left, and later dabbled in hippie activity, saw FSM as one of the "birthplaces" of the counterculture: "FSM was communal; it was theatre and politics; it was play and work. Politics and lifestyle interacted, each creating a context for the other."⁸⁶

Instead of grappling with the university bureaucrats, becoming a "cog" in the

⁸⁵ Hal Draper, "The Mind of Clark Kerr," *Los Angeles Free Press*, 5 November 1964; "Comments on Berkeley," *Free Student News* (New York), no date, 1965; Savio in Hal Draper, *Berkeley: The New Student Revolt* (New York, 1965), 98.

⁸⁶ Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 127-129; Hunter S. Thompson, *The Great Shark Hunt* (New York, 1979), 403; Goodman, *The Movement Toward a New America*, 637.

social machine, some students started dropping out of school and out of the mainstream, liberating themselves from the issues harassing others. “A lot of students I know are thinking of becoming nonstudents,” an ex-student told a journalist. “That student routine is a drag,” commented another. “Until I quit the grind I didn’t realize how many groovy things there are to do around Berkeley: concerts, films, good speakers, parties, pot, politics, women—I can’t think of a better way to live, can you?”⁸⁷

The counterculture believed it had found a better way. Beginning in 1965, the alienated would attempt to create a new culture, a new society—even a new “civilization.” Other hippies had more modest aims: living a better, simpler, happier life. Cold War America would give birth to a counterculture which opposed it in every respect, valuing libertarianism over authoritarianism, liberation over repression, egalitarianism over inequality, cooperation over competition, the bizarre over the conventional, the precarious over the secure, community over isolation, love over hate, peace over war, life over death.

As the last days of 1964 neared, there were a few indications of what was to come. Proto-hippie Karl Franzoni went by the name “Captain Fuck,” wore a goatee, red tights, a cape with an “F” etched into it, and lived with his friends Vitautus Alphonsus Paulekas, Zsou, and thirty-five member free-form dance troupe—The Freaks—in a communal house in Hollywood. Charlie Brown Artman dressed like an Indian years before it became fashionable. He built a tipi in Berkeley where he and friends sat around a fire smoking peyote, chanting prayers, and making music with drums and rattles. In

⁸⁷ Quoted in Thompson, *The Great Shark Hunt*, 402.

nearby San Francisco, between 50 and 250 people picketed around Union Square holding placards that read, “Justice Now For Marijuana,” and “Marijuana is Wholesome.”⁸⁸

By 1964, then, the seeds were being planted. The next summer, the counterculture began to bloom. Made up of youth who had endured the alienating effects of Cold War America, it became ever larger with the onset of a war in Southeast Asia.

⁸⁸ Barry Miles, *Hippie* (New York, 2004), 60; Wolfe, *The Hippies*, 91-93; “Pot Goes To California Courts,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 24 September 1964.

CHAPTER III

“THERE’S SOMETHING HAPPENIN’ HERE”: THE COUNTERCULTURE IN SAN FRANCISCO, NEW YORK, AND LOS ANGELES, 1965-1966

“I belong to a generation that came after the war, war babies, they call us. We’re different. We’re rock and roll, we’re friendly and we do a lot of strange things.”—

Billy Tieckelmann¹

Speaking about Vietnam, San Francisco poet Lenore Kandel told a Haight-Ashbury researcher, “There’s war And if you don’t want it to happen, you’ve got to have another direction. If you don’t want the world you’re pushed into, you have to find another world.”²

Hippies endeavored to find or create “another world” in their counterculture, but that proved impossible as they discovered it profoundly difficult to completely escape the society they had inherited. As such, most found living on the periphery of the mainstream and practicing values antithetical to that of the dominant culture satisfactory. Historians writing on the counterculture have given its initial years inadequate treatment. Coverage is typically limited to one place—San Francisco—and focused on a couple of events—Ken Kesey’s “acid tests” followed by the Trips Festival. These were important occurrences, certainly, yet they constitute only a fraction of a much larger and more complex phenomenon that was rapidly evolving. From 1965 to 1967, the

¹ Goodman, *Movement Toward A New America*, 19.

² Wolf, *Voices From the Love Generation*, 28.

counterculture's core values materialized and hippie communities emerged in New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. The counterculture consisted exclusively of cultural dissidents and differences between the New Left and counterculture in philosophy and style became apparent. An alarmist press publicized its concerns about growing drug use—marijuana, LSD, and amphetamines—at the nation's campuses. At the same time, the counterculture made itself visible; what began as “happenings” in 1965 progressed swiftly into dancehall concerts and “be-ins” by 1966.

America's involvement in the Vietnam War caused alienation to soar and the counterculture's ranks swelled exponentially. In 1965, President Lyndon Johnson committed the first combat troops to Vietnam, but the nation's entanglement there started at the end of World War II when Communist leader Ho Chi Minh expelled occupying Japanese forces with the aid of the American intelligence agency, the OSS. Committed to thwarting the incursion of Communism into Southeast Asia and to prevent the toppling of non-Communist nations like “dominoes,” America helped France regain its colonial position in Indochina in return for its support as a bulwark against Communist encroachment into Europe. Between 1945 and 1954, the United States funded three-quarters of France's war against the Communist Vietminh. After France's disastrous defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954, Vietnam was divided along the 17th parallel with Ho Chi Minh exercising power in the North and fiercely anti-Communist Ngo Dinh Diem at the head of the government in the South.

Firmly committed to protecting the South Vietnamese regime, President Eisenhower dispatched military “advisors” to Vietnam. By the time of John F.

Kennedy's assassination in November 1963, over 16,000 troops were stationed there. In the summer of 1964, North Vietnamese torpedo boats supposedly attacked two American destroyers. This encounter led to the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, which authorized President Johnson to take "all necessary measures to repel any armed attacks against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression." Johnson escalated the war, putting 184,300 troops "in-country" by the end of 1965; by 1968, that number had leaped to over half a million.³

Legions of youth hated the war, for it was "beyond brutality," an "obscenity," an "atrocious," and "pure madness," resulting in countless "incinerated, gutted, bayoneted and bombed human bodies." The United States military dropped napalm, poisonous gas, and fragmentation bombs on Vietnamese men, women, and children—people Washington officials claimed to be protecting. By 1967, America had unleashed more bombs on Vietnam than it had in all theatres during World War II. Anti-war youth found the suffering, killing, and death on both sides unconscionable.⁴

The war's detractors did not constitute a monolith as they offered multiple and diverse justifications for their opposition. Many simply opposed war on principle, especially pacifists. Others thought the war unjust, waged primarily to spread America's sphere of influence in Southeast Asia where it had no rightful place. Young Americans died for a "delusion." They did not fight for freedom, the war's foes asserted, but aided an "immoral" and "imperialist" war, propping up a corrupt and illegitimate South

³ Gulf of Tonkin Resolution quoted in George C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975* (New York, 1986), 122.

⁴ Lawrence Lipton, "The Wasp," *Los Angeles Free Press*, 21 January 1966; Herring, *America's Longest War*, 145.

Vietnamese government in Saigon.

Many opposed the war on pragmatic grounds: preserving an independent, non-communist South Vietnam had no bearing on American or world security. Furthermore, students found the government's policies and priorities baffling. The United States was the wealthiest country in the world, yet it did not adequately assist its destitute population; instead, tens of millions of dollars went toward the appropriation of more guns, bombs, and ammunition to kill people on the other side of the world.

America's enmeshment in Vietnam further alienated those who had experienced the shocks of the 1950s and early 1960s, but the war alone, alienating baby-boomers coming of age in the mid-to-late sixties, produced new counterculturalists, hundreds of thousands, if not millions. "From Vietnam, I learned to despise my countrymen, my government, and the entire English-speaking world, with its history of genocide and international conquest. I was a normal kid," wrote co-founder of the *Liberation News Service (LNS)* and back-to-the-land communitarian Raymond Mungo.⁵

Another crucial alienating factor included the draft, for the government coerced young men to commit violence and to die in an abominable, unnecessary—and, after the Tet Offensive in 1968—seemingly endless war. Undergraduate students (and graduate students until the summer of 1968) could avoid conscription with a deferment, but lived in fear of losing that deferment should they fail to maintain an adequate grade point average. Men who resisted induction or burned their draft cards faced incarceration. Many applied for conscientious objector status, some went to jail, while perhaps 100,000

⁵ Ray Mungo, *Famous Long Ago: My Life and Hard Times with Liberation News Service* (Boston, 1970), 3.

made their way over the Canadian border. Draft opponents pilloried the director of the Selective Service System. “General Hershey wants you to drop napalm on Vietnamese children, distribute candy bars and liberate the entire subcontinent back to the Stone Age,” wrote a Seattle youth. A draft resistance movement coalesced. Many resisted military service because it violated their ideals and value systems. A California draft resister declared, “[I] shall not . . . submit my person nor my intellect to any organization (in this case the United States Armed Forces) which deals in the subversion of love and life and which teaches death and hate above understanding.”⁶

Vietnam and the draft bred disillusionment, as did rules and regulations that governed students’ lives: *in loco parentis* (“in place of the parent”). Universities and colleges mandated codes of conduct in an effort to usher the young into responsible adulthood. Many found the university repressive, a place where they had no rights. Rules dictated where one ate, slept, lived, and what one wore. Guidelines attempted to prevent students from going to bed together. A significant portion of the student handbook at the University of Michigan outlined women’s hours and curfews. Men who visited women’s dorms struggled to keep three of four limbs on the floor at all times in order to comply with the rules. Underage drinking, smoking marijuana, curfew violations, inappropriate contact with the opposite sex, a traffic ticket—even throwing an errant snowball—might result in suspension or expulsion. Offenders often had no right to appeal. Students contested campus paternalism. “In loco parentis is suffering from rigor mortis,” *Time* reported in the fall of 1966. “On almost every campus, students are

⁶ Anderson, *Movement and the Sixties*, 322; “The Great Underground Freeway,” *Helix*, 13 April 1967; Resister quoted in Goodman, *Movement Toward A New America*, 19.

either attacking in loco parentis—the notion that a college can govern their drinking, sleeping, and partying—or happily celebrating its death.”⁷

Like campus paternalism, university bureaucracies and curriculums frustrated students. The 1960s witnessed the unprecedented growth of the “multiversity.” Its antecedents dated back to World War II when the government and institutions of scientific knowledge colluded to produce the Manhattan Project’s atom bomb. This partnership continued into the Cold War. The military and manufacturers required trained experts to develop new technologies and consumer products and the university became increasingly important to these centers of power, turning out college grads to staff them. Then in 1957, the Soviets launched Sputnik, igniting the space race. Public dollars poured into higher education. Total spending on universities spiraled from over \$740 million in 1945 to nearly \$7 billion in 1965. The massive baby-boom generation also fueled expansion. From 1963 to 1973, college enrollments doubled from 4.7 million to 9.6 million. Annual growth rates quadrupled. In the 1940s, not a single university registered more than 15,000 students. By the sixties, 50 universities matriculated 30,000 or more. The “megaversity” subjected students to huge bureaucracies, computerized student records, and impersonal televised lectures designed to improve educational efficiency.⁸

The students who eventually dropped out of the mainstream perceived universities as “sick,” remote-feeling “factories” where they constituted mere numbers,

⁷ Beth Bailey, *Sex in the Heartland* (Cambridge, MA, 1999), 78-79; Anderson, *Movement and the Sixties*, 98; Lytle, *America’s Uncivil Wars*, 169; “Students: Moods & Mores,” *Time*, 18 November 1966, 95-96.

⁸ Gitlin, *The Sixties*, 20-21; Landon Y. Jones, *Great Expectations: America and the Baby Boom Generation* (New York, 1980), 82-83; Lytle, *America’s Uncivil Wars*, 168.

herded “from class to class like cattle.” Many undergrads had disliked high school, but continued onto university anyway, going through the motions, doing what their parents expected of them. Eugene Bernofsky, co-founder of the first rural hippie commune, Drop City, recalled his experience at Erasmus High: “It seemed as if youth, when not chained to the walls of the classrooms, were dragging chains with them down the hallways. The adults, by insisting on quiet and regiment, seemed like prison wardens.” For Bernofsky, “College was just a glorified extension of high school.” In university and underground newspapers, students complained about irrelevant course curriculums and “class standings . . . evaluated test scores and fulfillment of requirements left over from the 19th century.” Some found assigned books beyond their comprehension without frequent class meetings, while others argued that instructors failed to appear at office hours, that they had little to no personal contact with professors and other students, and that exams did not accurately test students’ knowledge. Faulty told them “what to read, what to write . . . what’s true and what isn’t.” “Tell the man what he wants to hear or he’ll fail your ass out of the course,” asserted a sympathetic instructor at California State-Los Angeles, Jerry Farber, in his widely circulated article, “The Student as Nigger.” Many got the impression that they endured “programmed boredom,” only to obtain a diploma and “a dull, secure job.”⁹

If the war, draft, and a repressive university were not disconcerting enough, authorities increasingly harassed and intimidated the young. The police, FBI, and school

⁹ Mark Matthews, *Droppers: America’s First Hippie Commune, Drop City* (Norman, OK, 2010), 28, 31; Rikki Houston, “UWM Free University,” *Kaleidoscope* (Milwaukee), 6-19 October 1967; Robert M. Gerfy, “Freshmen Ferment,” *Western Activist* (Kalamazoo, MI), 20 October 1966; Char Jolles, “A Word To Freshmen,” *The Paper* (East Lansing), 29 September 1966; Farber in Hopkins, *The Hippie Papers*, 160-168; “Letters to the Editor,” *Open City Press* (San Francisco), 6-13 January 1965.

administrators executed their duties, but it did not appear that way to the rebellious; cultural and political dissidents felt that the Establishmentarians aspired to extinguish their freedom. In Los Angeles, newly enacted ordinances restricted the playing of music on the city's beaches and at public parks. On both coasts, city safety officials teamed with police to oust bohemians and beatniks from housing. In Berkeley, the FBI tailed and interrogated anti-draft organizers. Police searched for loiterers and curfew violators to arrest at hip hangouts and businesses denied service to men with longer hair. At high schools throughout the country, authorities ordered students who wore sandals, boots, short skirts, mustaches, beards, or Beatle-cuts to go home until they had more of the "hallmarks of an All-American Girl or boy." A prep school in Omaha even hired a barber for compulsory hair clipping. "A public school . . . is not a joint or a pad where beatniks gather, drink espresso coffee and substitute offensive behavior and bizarre dress in lieu of brains," stated the assistant attorney general of North Carolina and his attitude was typical. On college campuses, police hassled students over parking policies, provoking them to question authority and the character of those who wielded it. "There's something about a uniform," a University of Kansas student commented. "Either the uniform has some hidden magic Circe-power that turns men into—uh—reasonless animals or the idea of wearing a uniform appeals only to reasonless animals in the first place."¹⁰

As alienation among the sixties generation skyrocketed, the counterculture

¹⁰ "Letter to the Editor," *Los Angeles Free Press*, 16 July 1965; William Estes, "Building Officials Aid Drive on Gang, Beatnik Hangouts," *Los Angeles Times*, 26 August 1965, p. SF1; "FBI Dogs Anti-draft Organizer," *Berkeley Barb*, 22 October 1965; "Cops Crack Down, But is it Curfew?" *Berkeley Barb*, 14 January 1966; David Smothers, "Mopheads Refuse the Brush-Off," *Boston Globe*, 26 September 1965, p. 28; "Campus Cops," *The Screw* (Lawrence, KS), 8 November 1967.

bloomed, and so did the underground press. Max Scherr founded the *Berkeley Barb* in August 1965. It reported on various aspects of the “movement”: anti-war rallies, New Left activism, civil rights, and alternative lifestyles. Two months later, former artist Walter Bowart established the *East Village Other*. Less politically oriented than the *Barb*, the *Other* featured freaky comic strips, stories on local “happenings,” ran sexualized personal ads, included nude photos of “Slum Goddesses,” and printed endless articles on marijuana and LSD. In November, the *Fifth Estate* rolled off the press in Detroit; it gave prominence to rock music and the activities of government agencies, the FBI and CIA. *The Paper* in East Lansing followed closely on the *Estate*’s heels in December, covering developments at Michigan State University.¹¹

Underground newspapers elucidated the values and social philosophy of the counterculture. The triad “sex, drugs, and rock and roll,” usually comes to mind when one reflects on the hippies. During the sixties, the popular media focused extensively on these characteristics and on the counterculture’s most spectacular peculiarities: be-ins, bizarre clothing, public nudity, and drug casualties. Many scholars have subsequently done the same. To be sure, hippies revered “sex, drugs, and rock and roll,” but their numerous, complex, and widely varying principles cannot be encapsulated in such a cliché and simplistic phrase.

Counterculturalists held values and social philosophies diametrically different from the American majority. They reacted against Establishment ethics, deliberately engaging in behavior that ran counter to the mainstream, for they believed they had

¹¹ Peck, *Uncovering the Sixties*, 29-36.

discovered a new and better way to live. The System valued militancy and war—hippies valued peace; the System sexually repressed society—hippies championed free love; the System attempted to squelch the use of narcotics—hippies smoked dope and dropped acid; the System was clean-shaven—hippies grew beards. In the mid sixties, many of the counterculture’s bedrock values surfaced, values that continually evolved, gaining substance and vitality, becoming fully developed by the early seventies.¹²

Many counterculturalists sought to replace—destroy even—what they felt was an antiquated, corrupt, sick, degenerate, dominant culture. This they hoped to achieve by fashioning a new one founded on the principles of compassion, cooperation, honesty, peace, love, and understanding. Hippies cultivated these values in their local communities, carrying out social experiments in hip outposts in cities, communes, and at universities. But the most ardent and devoted hippies wanted more than to transform the culture: they wanted to build an entirely new society consisting of alternative institutions and changed human relations. Many others, however, did not delude themselves by harboring such lofty, utopian ideals; they did not believe that they could remake the world to their liking. For these individuals, the counterculture represented an alternative lifestyle, an attitude, a way of seeing the world.

Hippies embraced community, holding togetherness in high regard. A community of like-minded individuals provided a sense of comfort and familiarity as well as a refuge from majority society. The community ethic also entailed cooperation, eschewing competition, working toward common goals, building a new culture based on

¹² Art Johnson, “What Have You Got?”

moral precepts. “I love you all, whoever you are. Come, let’s work together,” wrote a frequenter of the Sunset Strip in Los Angeles. “Things are bad all over, the saying goes, and the only hope is people getting together with other people for the good of all the people,” commented John Sinclair in Detroit. “That IS what’s happening, and it’s the most beautiful thing in the world.”¹³

Another central characteristic of the hippie lifestyle and attitude included a preoccupation with the present. The present represented what mattered, the only position on the time-continuum with significant value. “Who cares about tomorrow and yesterday?” Bob Dylan proclaimed, “People don’t live there; they live now.” Hippies advocated living life to the utmost, experiencing as much as possible at the moment. From their perspective, too many people spent their lives reflecting on the past or planning for the future, “dreaming and scheming instead of DOING.”¹⁴

The hip also valued direct experience. They took chances, threw caution to the wind, and lived life to the fullest, no matter the risks involved. Living was dangerous, “a win or lose game with happiness and personal fulfillment as the stakes.” The hip thought that people spent too much time worrying about their material security, letting life slip by. One should experience, as much as possible, “the joy, love, and pain of living . . . even if he is hurt more in the process.”¹⁵

The sexual ethics of counterculturalists emerged simultaneously with a larger trend in the sixties, the burgeoning “sexual revolution,” which was actually

¹³ Paul J. Robbins, “The Strip Is A Bummer?” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 14 January 1966; John Sinclair, “The Coatpuller,” *Fifth Estate* (Detroit), 15-31 December 1966.

¹⁴ Paul J. Robbins, “Bob Dylan As Bob Dylan,” *Fifth Estate* (Detroit), 30 July 1966; Sinclair, “The Coatpuller,” 15-31 December 1966.

¹⁵ “Getting Used To It,” *Fifth Estate* (Detroit), 30 July 1966.

“evolutionary” in many respects. A sexual revolution of sorts got underway in the 1920s, when youths challenged Victorian culture. Decades later, in the forties and fifties, Alfred Kinsey’s studies on human sexual behavior exploded the myth of a puritanical America; the “Kinsey Reports” revealed that 50 percent of women and 84 percent of men with high school diplomas had had premarital intercourse. The media became more sexualized. Following World War II, the Supreme Court started striking down unconstitutional censorship laws, and in 1953 Hugh Hefner’s *Playboy* hit the newsstand, topless women gracing its pages. Three years following its inception, its circulation numbered one million. *Playboy*’s philosophy—directed at male readers—was straightforward: have many sexual trysts and steer clear of relationships that necessitated settling down. The magazine broke sexual codes regarding monogamy and nudity, and brought sex out into the open. Hefner’s female equivalent, Helen Gurley Brown, published *Sex and the Single Girl* in 1962, a book that screamed sexual liberation for women. Brown urged her female readers to heed their biological urges and have intercourse whenever they wanted. And new contraceptive technology carried great implications for the sexual revolution. Approved by the FDA and made available for the first time in 1960, “the Pill” contributed to women’s adoption of sexual liberation, as they no longer worried about getting pregnant. Researchers made breakthroughs studying the physiology of sex. In 1966, William Masters and Virginia Johnson published the best-seller *Human Sexual Response*, which revealed that women could achieve multiple orgasms, and that the clitoris—not the vagina—produced female

orgasm.¹⁶

More than any other subset of youth within the sixties generation, the counterculture spearheaded the sexual revolution, attacking established principles and mores. From the outset, hippies held permissive attitudes. They considered sex fun, pleasurable, natural and healthy, a form of expression to be celebrated, not shunned or concealed. The counterculture struggled to transcend barriers to practicing sex freely; intercourse did not have to be confined to marriage, a stable partnership, or even between people in love, although hippies highly prized sex within a loving relationship. Counterculturalists preached the idea that individuals needed to discard their sexual “hang-ups” and repressions, especially feelings of guilt and shame. They also insisted that the human body was beautiful, not obscene or dirty. Although relatively rare among longhairs, group sex or “orgies” were permissible, provided no individual coerced another against their will into participating.¹⁷

The counterculture championed sexual liberation. The press and historians have emphasized that the hippies favored “free love,” but hippies rarely used that phrase to describe their philosophy. The counterculture dropped society’s “hang-ups” and “taboos,” bringing sex into the open, writing about it, discussing it, depicting it, and doing it. Dropouts passed over “games” and traditional rituals such as dating, getting to intercourse quicker than those in straight society. “Well, like here it’s different, explained a Haight-Ashbury female. “If I meet a boy I like, I can tell him and he can tell

¹⁶ Bailey, “Sexual Revolution(s),” in Farber, ed., *The Sixties*, 235-258.

¹⁷ Lawrence Lipton, “The Wasp,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 12 February and 26 November 1965; Richard Thorne, “A Step Toward Sexual Freedom in Berkeley,” *Berkeley Barb*, 4 September 1965.

me, and then we just make love, that's all. Nobody gets uptight about it. I don't have to go to a shrink." Likewise, a male hippie remarked, "The girls don't play so many games. They play a few, but they don't play so many. You just ask a girl and she'll say yes or no."¹⁸

Counterculturalists of the activist persuasion, exemplified by the Sexual Freedom League, intended to smash traditional moral codes and legal obstacles impeding sexual liberation. The organization's founder, Jefferson Poland—who later legally changed his middle name to "Fuck"—was a flowers-in-his-hair beatnik who anticipated the counterculture's back-to-nature values and its melding of protest and theatrics. While living in a group house in San Francisco, his female roommates educated him on the anarchist doctrine "free love," and by the time he moved to New York City in the fall of 1963 he had embraced anarchy and the cause of sexual freedom. After his arrival, Poland founded the New York League for Sexual Freedom with Leo Koch, a biology professor who had been sacked from the University of Illinois for advocating premarital intercourse.¹⁹

At a speak-out at Columbia University in April 1964, the League demanded the decriminalization of prostitution, interracial marriage, oral and anal sex, bestiality, and transvestism. They also assaulted stringent divorce, censorship, public nudity, abortion and birth control laws and railed against police harassment of homosexuals. Other League demonstrations included picketing the New York Public Library, protesting the segregation of books about sex. In addition, the League raised objections to obscenity

¹⁸ B. Wolfe, *The Hippies*, 69; Yablonsky, *Hippie Trip*, 121.

¹⁹ Allyn, *Make Love, Not War*, 42-44.

charges slapped on the underground film *Flaming Creatures*. The League soon disbanded and Poland traveled back to San Francisco.²⁰

Back West, Poland renamed his organization the Sexual Freedom League. Imitating the civil disobedience tactics of the civil rights movement, the League defied local laws, striking a blow for personal freedom. Like other hippies, Poland believed the naked human body was not obscene and that laws prohibiting public nudity bolstered a repressive sexual culture. In August 1965, Poland and three others—a young man and two young women—held a nude “wade-in” at Aquatic Park municipal beach in San Francisco. In front of cameras and a crowd of spectators, the four entered the freezing ocean and three shed their bathing suits. An anarchist on the beach waved a banner that read, “Why Be Ashamed of Your Body?” while supporters standing in a picket line chanted, “Sex is clean! Law’s obscene!” Authorities sent Poland to jail for five weekends and the women received suspended sentences. The wade-in received national news coverage.²¹

In addition to attacking traditional sexual mores, youth experimented with dope. An increasing number of college students from coast to coast smoked marijuana, dropped lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD), and swallowed stimulants—“pep pills”—although their numbers were relatively few compared to the numbers that turned on in the coming years. Dope spread as non-students and former students—especially in the East—brought mind-expanding substances onto campus from hip urban enclaves in the vicinity of the universities. Students huddled together in dimly lit dorm rooms, put on

²⁰ Ibid., 46-47.

²¹ Ibid., 41, 42, 49.

records, strummed guitars, lit candles and incense, and passed around joints or sugar cubes doused with LSD. In Texas, chewable peyote buttons could easily be obtained. Professors, researchers, and students gave estimates in 1966 as to how many people used dope and these estimates varied widely. *Time* estimated that 10,000 California youth had tried acid, while a professor at the University of Southern California guessed that ten percent of students at large universities used marijuana. Others offered higher estimates. At Harvard and New York University, students judged that a fifth of the campus had tried marijuana or LSD, while a graduate student at San Francisco State believed that a quarter of the student body had “some contact” with pot. Authorities cracked down on users. At Brown University and San Francisco State, administrators expelled or suspended students for possession. Arrests mounted as police discovered possession at major universities in California, New York, Massachusetts, Ohio, Wisconsin, Colorado, and North Carolina.²²

The press trumpeted and sensationalized the spread of drug use, whipping up a public frenzy. Magazines and newspapers ran articles with the titles, “An Epidemic of Acid Heads,” “Psychosis Peril Seen in Marijuana,” “Girl 5, Eats LSD and Goes Wild,” “Thrill Drug Warps Mind, Kills.” The Establishment press’s coverage tended to be negative and made a point of portraying acidheads as society’s rejects. *Time*, for example, quoted Los Angeles psychiatrist Sidney Cohen who posited that LSD enthusiasts were “life’s losers—dissatisfied, restless people, afflicted with problems they

²² Bernard Gavzer, “New Kicks On The College Campus?” *The Baltimore Sun*, 5 June 1966, p. FC1; Leonard Downie Jr., “Drug-Taking Spreads On Nation’s Campuses,” *The Washington Post*, 9 September 1965, p. A1; “Psychiatry: An Epidemic of Acid Heads,” *Time*, 11 March 1966; Harry Nelson, “Educated Youths Face Danger From Marijuana,” *Los Angeles Times*, 3 April 1966, p. B1.

can't handle.” Cohen continued, “A lot of them wallow in self-pity and denigrate those who have made it in the ‘square’ world.” The media emphasized acid casualties—suicides, hospitalizations, people who thought they could fly and plummeted to their deaths, a young man who tried to stop traffic on a busy boulevard, killed by a car. The press also stressed that marijuana smokers naturally “graduated” to harder drugs like LSD and heroin.²³

Life’s “losers” disregarded the Establishment press, for the counterculture’s perspectives on the values of dope were antithetical to the Establishment’s. Hippies made distinctions between “dope” and “drugs.” Heads considered dope to be non-addictive, “mind expanding” substances—LSD, peyote, mescaline, psilocybin, and marijuana; conversely, drugs were thought to be dangerous and addictive—amphetamines, heroin, opiates, and barbiturates. Other “drugs” the hippies associated with the middle-class and their parents—nicotine and alcohol. As Tom Coffin, a writer for the Atlanta underground *Great Speckled Bird*, explained:

DOPE, not DRUGS—alcohol is a drug, pot is DOPE; nicotine is a DRUG, acid is DOPE; DRUGS turn you off, dull your senses, give you the strength to face another day in Death America, DOPE turns you on, heightens sensory awareness, sometimes twists them out of shape and you experience that too, gives you vision and clarity, necessary to create Life from Death.²⁴

The counterculture commonly used marijuana. Heads especially prized the best quality, most potent weed—Acapulco Gold and Panama Red. Hippies valued marijuana

²³ Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 150; Cohen quoted in “An Epidemic of Acid Heads;” “Essay: LSD,” *Time*, 17 June 1966; Harry Nelson, “Psychosis Peril Seen in Marijuana,” *Los Angeles Times*, 11 February 1966, p. 4; Nelson, “Educated Youths Face Danger,” p. B1.

²⁴ John Bryan, “Why We Publish Open City Press,” *Open City Press* (San Francisco), 27 January 1965; LEMAR, “Narco Bust Set,” *The Fifth Estate* (Detroit), 15-31 December 1966; Tom Coffin, “Dope,” *Great Speckled Bird* (Atlanta), 16 October 1969.

for the pleasant and relaxing sensations it produced. Many believed it provided a portal to expanded consciousness and enlightenment. Not surprisingly, marijuana enthusiasts parried Establishment claims concerning the dangers of dope smoking. They denied that grass was addictive and argued that dopers were not responsible for rising crime rates. They also maintained that marijuana was not a “gateway” or “stepping stone” to harder drugs. Marijuana advocates, especially those who pushed for its legalization, pointed to medical evidence to advance their claims that grass was less addictive and less harmful than alcohol.²⁵

The hippies indulged in LSD as much as they smoked dope. Acid had been in use for two decades before the counterculture got its hands on it. The psychedelic revolution’s beginnings can be traced back to 1938 when Swiss chemist Albert Hofmann accidentally synthesized LSD while experimenting with a rye fungus intended to relieve migraine headaches. Five years later, on April 16, 1943, he absorbed some of the substance through his fingertips. Hofmann proceeded to administer self-experiments and noted that the drug altered the state of consciousness and produced wild hallucinations: “Kaleidoscopic, fantastic images surged in on me, alternating, variegated, opening and then closing themselves in circles and spirals, exploding in colored fountains, rearranging and hybridizing themselves in constant flux.” Sandoz, the giant pharmaceutical company who employed Hofmann, began shipping LSD to American psychiatrists.²⁶

²⁵ John Wilcock, “The Village Square,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 6 August 1965; “Referendum Would Remove Marijuana Prohibition,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 21 January 1966.

²⁶ Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, xvii-xviii; Albert Hofmann, *LSD: My Problem Child* (New York, 1980), 19.

But others got hold of acid. The CIA tested it throughout the 1950s, hoping to unleash its potential mind-control capabilities. In a research program known as ARTICHOKE, the CIA administered LSD to soldiers, convicts, the mentally and terminally ill, ethnic minorities, the general population, and their own agents. In 1953, the agency initiated further experimentation with the secret project MK-ULTRA. Agents speculated whether LSD given to a prisoner of war might have the effect of a “truth serum,” reducing that individual’s reluctance to divulge secret intelligence. Exploration backfired when CIA personnel dosed unsuspecting army technicians at a conference in backwoods Maryland. Later, one of the dosed, a biological warfare researcher, Frank Olson, became depressed and despondent, throwing himself through a tenth-story Hilton hotel window, an incident the agency covered up for twenty years. Despite Olson’s suicide, the CIA continued its research; the Army tested LSD on nearly 1,500 soldiers by the mid sixties.²⁷

But the government did not have a monopoly on acid. A former World War II intelligence officer, Captain Alfred Hubbard—the “Johnny Appleseed of LSD”—traveled North America and Europe distributing it to friends, statesmen, churchmen, and scientists. *Brave New World* author Aldous Huxley published *The Doors of Perception* in 1954, a book that extolled mescaline’s ability to open the mind to new sensations and mystical experiences. Interest in psychedelics grew and the famous turned on. The publisher of *Time*, Henry Luce, and his wife, Claire Booth, dropped acid with Huxley.

²⁷ Paul Perry, *On the Bus: The Complete Guide to the Legendary Trip of Ken Kesey and the Merry Pranksters and the Birth of the Counterculture* (New York, 1990), 4, 7-9; Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 3-43.

Henry later took LSD on a golf course where he claimed he spoke to God. Actor Cary Grant claimed the drug enabled him to love women more fully and genuinely.²⁸

Timothy Leary researched psychedelics in the early 1960s and eventually became the decade's undisputed champion of their virtues. Leary's initiation into the world of psychedelics occurred in the summer of 1960 after he ingested *Psilocybe mexicana*—"magic mushrooms"—in Cuernavaca Mexico. He returned to Harvard in the fall, determined to conduct systematic experiments with the mysterious fungus; he and Richard Alpert (later Baba Ram Dass) set up the Harvard Psilocybin Project. Within two years, the professors had moved onto LSD. Harvard fired Alpert in May 1963 for doling acid out to students. Leary failed to attend an honors program committee meeting and Harvard authorities dismissed him, too. The pair continued investigating LSD at Millbrook, a 64-room mansion in Dutchess County, New York with their organization, the International Federation for Internal Freedom (IFIF), which was soon disbanded, replaced by the Castalia Foundation. Thirty men and women lived there communally, regularly flying high on LSD—some for ten days straight—seeking mystical awareness and aiming for permanent spiritual transformations.²⁹

Leary came to be the drug's greatest proselytizer, an acid evangelist, the "High Priest" of LSD. He believed that psychedelics distributed to the masses would have the effect of creating a new world. "Wars, class conflicts, racial tensions, economic exploitation, religious strife, ignorance, and prejudice were all caused by narrow social

²⁸ Paul Perry, *On the Bus*, 4-7; Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 44-53; David Farber, "The Intoxicated State/Illegal Nation: Drugs in the Sixties Counterculture," in *Imagine Nation*, ed. Braunstein and Doyle, 21.

²⁹ Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 71-113.

conditioning,” Leary postulated. “If we could help people plug into the empathy circuits of the brain, then positive social change could occur.” Leary tried to make his utopian social vision a reality, skillfully using the media to promote LSD, presenting lectures at universities, encouraging potential followers to “Turn On, Tune In, and Drop Out.” *Turning On* involved activating one’s “neural and genetic equipment,” becoming “sensitive to the many and various levels of consciousness.” *Tuning In* entailed “interacting harmoniously with the world around you,” externalizing, materializing, and expressing one’s “new internal perspectives.” *Dropping Out* required “detachment from involuntary or unconscious commitments,” and favoring “mobility, choice, and change.”³⁰

Historians have overestimated and overstated Timothy Leary’s influence on, and importance within, the counterculture. Leary probably swayed some heads to turn on, and others certainly shared his revolutionary vision. Most hippies, however, discovered psychedelics on their own as smugglers brought LSD into America from Canada, Europe, and Mexico. By the late sixties, those interested in taking acid could obtain it in most college towns and in large cities at affordable prices. Many acid users did not know of Leary and few were dedicated followers. Even in the Haight-Ashbury—the nation’s LSD capitol—“Learyites” constituted a minority of acidheads. According to writer Charles Perry, most did not endorse his style and philosophy in the district. When Leary visited in late 1966 and communicated his “Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out” mantra to a group of youth, they did not comprehend his message. And very few individuals

³⁰ Timothy Leary, *Flashbacks: An Autobiography* (New York, 1990), 49-50; 253.

became hippies under the High Priest's influence. "I don't need Timothy Leary or LSD," Jerry Garcia told an interviewer. "Nobody in the Haight-Ashbury follows Leary. The people here would have done this thing without acid, without Leary. I would have been a member of some weird society wherever I went This is our trip."³¹

LSD enthusiasts found it difficult to describe acid's effects in words: "I cannot convey the idea of a nuclear explosion by lighting a match." When they did write and speak about acid's effects and its potential uses, most asserted that it opened the mind to mystical experiences and expanded consciousness, though some did not believe that it offered miraculous visions, but only facilitated the discovery of dormant knowledge that already existed in each person. Some believed that during the course of an LSD trip, the mind shattered and then reassembled itself, changing the user forever, enriching their sense of self-worth and expanding their spiritual horizons. Many felt that it acted as a vehicle for achieving harmony with human nature or finding God. To counter unfavorable publicity, defenders contended that the psychedelic was not dangerous or addictive and that "bad trips" were the exception, the result of "misuse."³²

Not content with merely turning inward, having personal mystical and enlightening experiences, cultural insurgents championed "dope revolution" as a panacea for the world's problems, contending that marijuana and acid could precipitate fundamental social change. Actively turning others on represented a political act within the social sphere. Psychedelics, cultural radicals maintained, possessed the power to

³¹ "Essay: LSD," *Time*, 17 June 1966; Perry, *Haight-Ashbury*, 107-108; Garcia quoted in Pichaske, *A Generation in Motion*, 126.

³² Peter Edler, "The Human Element in LSD," *The Open City Press* (San Francisco), 17-23 March 1965; "LSD—The Way to God," *The Modern Utopian* (San Francisco), May 1966.

transform one's values; the more dope indulgers there were, the logic went, the more peace, love, and understanding there would be. "Everybody wants to turn Lyndon Johnson on," a student told an investigative reporter. "If he'd take a 500-milligram trip, the war in Vietnam would be over when he got back."³³

For some, LSD eased integration into the counterculture as it had the effect of exposing one's alienation. Ron Thelin, co-owner of the Psychedelic Shop in the Haight-Ashbury, had such an experience. Acid revealed society's problems to him. "When I first turned on," he told author Burton Wolfe, "it pulled the rug out from under me. Suddenly I saw all the bullshit in the whole educational and social system, and that's where I was. The Vietnam War was pressing in on me. I couldn't justify going to school with this war on." Psychedelics helped him to understand that schools turned out "robots to keep the social system going and to keep the war going."³⁴

Some hippies held acid in such high regard that they claimed it facilitated the adoption of countercultural values. Hallucinogens helped Ron's brother Jay to leave behind his reservations about sexual intimacy:

I had had sex problems that were hanging up in my life. I couldn't relate to another person that way Then I had this experience with LSD, and I saw that this is what people do—they fuck—and there's really nothing to it there's nothing to be ashamed of, these are human things, and you're all part of the same universe, the same patterns of life, and they're groovy!³⁵

Many heads explored dope as a result of their alienation, searching for answers, the truth, something authentic, a pathway to enlightenment. But it would be

³³ LEMAR, "Narco Bust Set;" Student quoted in Nicholas von Hoffman, "A New Drug Culture is Burgeoning," *Washington Post*, 21 August 1966, p. E1.

³⁴ Wolfe, *The Hippies*, 26.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 25.

disingenuous and misleading to claim that every person who ever smoked a joint or placed a tab of acid on his or her tongue searched for anything beyond a good time. In the freewheeling and insouciant atmosphere of hippiedom, one did not need a justification for reveling in dope nor did anyone ask for one. The massive hype surrounding LSD, perpetuated by newspapers, magazines, television, and radio compelled many to turn on. For instance, a woman recalled that, “the media were advertising it, saying things like ‘heightening your perception,’ ‘seeing things like you’ve never seen them before,’ ‘getting to the roots of religion and ritual,’ ‘playing with madness.’ All that was just fascinating to me. I thought, WOW! Give me some.” As dope use and hippiedom burgeoned, growing in popularity, an increasing number of young people got high for “kicks.” A head who had used acid as a means to expand his consciousness and to reach God recalled a conversation he overheard between “teenyboppers.” “I was shocked to hear these kids talking about using LSD that weekend,” he remembered. “They weren’t searching. They were going to have a great party, and they were going to have great records, and they were going to have great sex . . . I mean, I saw it as a sacrament, and they were going to drop LSD for the sheer partying of it.”³⁶

The most ardent acidheads established psychedelic churches. Former clinical psychologist Arthur J. Kleps—who called himself Chief Boo-Hoo—created the Neo-American Church in 1965. Kleps, whom Timothy Leary called a “mad monk,” did not take himself seriously; he intentionally joked on institutionalized churches and

³⁶ Joan Morrison and Robert K. Morrison, *From Camelot to Kent State: The Sixties Experience in the Words of Those Who Lived It* (New York, 2001), 205, 213.

religion—the Neo-American Church was a “‘non-church’ church.” Kleps set no concrete doctrines or moral codes. A satirical and silly organization, the church’s “strategic concepts” included, “Relax and act goofy as you like—play the game of cops and robbers comically,” and “Infiltrate and take over the communication and entertainment industry.” Rituals consisted of several individuals reading from random books simultaneously and dancing with stroboscopes to activate mind expansion. The church’s motto was “Victory over Horseshit” and Kleps deemed Bob Dylan the organization’s official poet. Payers of the small monthly dues received a psychedelic coloring book and the church bulletin, “Divine Toad Sweat.” Membership climbed to over a thousand.³⁷

The only thing the Boo-Hoos took seriously was their devotion to LSD. Acid had “religious” connotations for them as members used it in a group setting in an effort to better appreciate “God,” by which Kleps meant a deep psychological, mystical experience, whereby the “ultimate Truth” could be ascertained. Kleps claimed acid was a “sacrament,” a part of the Boo-Hoo religion, and as such, he argued that the government could not criminalize the Neo-Americans’ use of it. The Boo-Hoos lost their case in court; the judge pointed to the organization’s official theme song—“Row, Row, Row, Your Boat”—and ruled that that Kleps’ outfit did not qualify as a church.³⁸

Dope was important, but rock and roll proved equally central to the counterculture. Bob Dylan became one of its most revered artists. In 1963, he burst onto the musical and political landscape, greatly impacting the young, political activists

³⁷ “LSD—The Way to God;” Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 105.

³⁸ “LSD—The Way to God;” Unger, *The Sixties*, 150.

in particular. Dylan wrote deeply personal lyrics, yet he became a generational spokesperson, a position and title he came to regret and reject. New Leftists admired the albums *The Freewheelin' Bob Dylan* and *The Times They Are A-Changin'*, released in 1963 and 1964 respectively, because the lyrics spoke to their concerns: racism, Jim Crow, Cold War militarism, and the prospect of nuclear apocalypse. “Whether he liked it or not, Dylan *sang for us* We followed his career as if he were singing our song; we got in the habit of asking where he was taking us next,” recalled Todd Gitlin. “The Death of Emmett Till,” “The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll” and “Only a Pawn In Their Game,” addressed racially motivated murders, the latter pertaining to the assassination of civil rights leader Medgar Evers. “Masters of War” and “With God on Our Side” skewered Cold War ideology and the military-industrial complex. Written in the midst of the Cuban Missile Crisis, “A Hard Rain’s Gonna Fall,” described a nightmarish world in the aftermath of nuclear war. Dylan sang that the answer to war and racism was “Blowin’ in the Wind,” and, in “The Times They Are A-Changin,’” he spoke of a new generation that would bring new morals and values to a country that failed to live up to its creed:

Come mothers and fathers throughout the land
And don't criticize what you can't understand
Your sons and your daughters are beyond your command
Your old road is rapidly aging
Please get out of the new one if you can't lend your hand
For the times they are a-changin'³⁹

By 1965, to the chagrin of New Leftists and folk purists, Dylan abandoned

³⁹ Gitlin, *The Sixties*, 197-198; Chris Charlesworth, comp., *Dylan: 100 Songs and Pictures* (New York, 2009), 55.

“finger pointing” songs and his acoustic guitar for a Fender electric, amplifiers, a head of fuzzy disheveled hair, and introspective and surrealistic lyrics. And it was at this juncture when Dylan made a significant impact on the counterculture. The Beatles had influenced his shift to electric music. Dylan knew intuitively that the Fab Four represented more than a passing fad, and that rock was the wave of the future: “I really dug them. Everybody else thought they were for the teenyboppers, that they were gonna pass right away. But it was obvious to me that they had staying power. I knew they were pointing the direction of where music had to go.”⁴⁰

His transformation to rocker expanded his appeal to a far broader audience. At the Newport Folk Festival, backed by the Paul Butterfield Blues Band, Dylan burst into chugging amplified rock; veteran folkie Pete Seeger seethed with anger and the crowd booed. Outraged folkies felt Dylan had lost his authenticity. His break from politics and protest music mirrored a larger trend: an evolving schism between the New Left and the counterculture. The young man from Hibbing, Minnesota rejected the role of spokesperson—“The Great Cause Fighter”—that had been foisted upon him. “All I can do is be me—whoever that is,” Dylan told an underground journalist. Politicos charged him with “selling out,” scorning his shift to political indifference. “He is seen as a threat to the left, representing an anti-political response to the increasing crises in American life,” commented a Bay-area Californian. Like the growing army of hippie dropouts, Dylan had had enough of politics. “The stuff you’re writing is bullshit, because politics is bullshit,” Dylan told folk singer Phil Ochs. “It’s all unreal. The only thing that’s real

⁴⁰ Anthony Scaduto, *Bob Dylan* (New York, 1971), 175.

is inside you. Your feelings. Just look at the world you're writing about and you'll see you're wasting your time. The world is . . . just absurd." The lyrical content of his songs no longer pertained to politics, but to his own sentiments and dilemmas, and the theme of personal freedom. "The left has been mistaken," wrote a Dylan supporter, "It is not only the negroes who are in chains, but all Americans who are trapped by uneasy boredom, by loneliness, and god knows what else. These are the chains that Dylan wants to break."⁴¹

His fourth album, *Another Side of Bob Dylan*, released in 1964, foreshadowed the thematic substance of albums to come. "My Back Pages" repudiated his politically oriented work ("But I was so much older then/I'm younger than that now") and "I Shall Be Free No. 10" contained an early reference to dope ("blow their minds"). In 1965 and 1966, Dylan produced three of his best—and most influential—albums: *Bringing It All Back Home*, *Highway 61 Revisited*, and *Blonde on Blonde*. Along with the Beatles, he transformed popular music into an intellectual art form by applying serious, surreal, poetic lyrics to rock and roll. Listeners contemplated, analyzed, and debated the meaning of his songs. Dylan's records reflected the values of the counterculture, while spreading its message. *Bringing It All Back Home* featured an ode to dope, "Mr. Tambourine Man" ("And take me disappearing through the smoke rings of my mind") and on *Blonde on Blonde*'s "Rainy Day Women #12 & 45," Dylan shouted gleefully, "Everybody must get stoned." *Highway 61*'s most famous cut, "Like A Rolling Stone," romanticized breaking away from traditional values, the quest for freedom, and the

⁴¹ Robbins, "Bob Dylan as Bob Dylan;" Scaduto, *Bob Dylan*, 176; Goodman, *Movement Toward A New America*, 378-379.

precarious, freewheeling lifestyle (“How does it feel?/How does it feel?/To be on your own/With no direction home/Like a complete unknown/Like a rolling stone”). “Ballad of a Thin Man” mocked the straight and square world. The prim and proper Thin Man, confronted by nudity, geeks, one-eyed midgets, and freaks is asked repeatedly, “Something is happening here but you don’t know what it is/Do you, Mister Jones?”⁴²

The Beatles influenced the counterculture as much—if not more—than Dylan. From the moment John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, and Ringo Starr set foot in America, mothers, fathers, and especially youths sensed a certain strength and energy in their music and personalities. On February 9, 1964 the Beatles appeared on the Ed Sullivan Show before an estimated 73 million viewers, more than 60 percent of the television audience. By early April, the Fab Four held the top five positions on the *Billboard* singles chart and two of their albums sat at the top of the L.P. best-sellers list. In July, teenagers across the nation huddled into theatres to see the Beatles on film in *A Hard Day’s Night*. They had “invaded” and conquered America, causing “Beatlemania.” Girls screamed, tore at their hair, fainted. Beatle-obsessed consumers purchased anything with “Beatles” on it—hats, t-shirts, wigs, pajamas, plastic guitars, boots, dolls, board games, soda, and ice-cream sandwiches. Two enterprisers even sold one-inch pieces of the unwashed sheets each Beatle had slept on.⁴³

America felt the force and effect of the Beatles immediately. Historians and rock scholars have offered several explanations for their enormous success and the ecstatic

⁴² Goodman, *Movement Toward A New America*, 379-380; Charlesworth, *Dylan*, 158, 186.

⁴³ David P. Szatmary, *Rockin’ in Time: A Social History of Rock and Roll* (Upper Saddle River, NJ, 1996), 98-101; Nicholas Schaffner, *The Beatles Forever* (New York, 1978), 25, 31, 33.

reception they received. It has been suggested that with their humor and wit, the Beatles helped revive the flagging spirits of a nation still mourning the death of President Kennedy, killed a few months before their arrival. Furthermore, youth were drawn to the working-class lads from Liverpool, England, because they were a rarity in America. Moreover, the Beatles rejuvenated rock and roll, filling the void left by the departure of rock's early heroes. Buddy Holly had been killed in a plane crash and Chuck Berry, Elvis, and Bo Diddley had dropped off the charts. The Beatles brought African-American music back to its homeland, re-introducing it to young whites, with raucous, hard-driving covers of Chuck Berry's "Rock and Roll Music," the Isley Brothers' "Twist and Shout," Larry Williams' "Dizzy Miss Lizzy," and Little Richard's "Long Tall Sally." But the Beatles did not merely cover the songs of others, for they wrote their own tunes and possessed a distinctive, original, and exciting sound, (they incorporated minor chords and sevenths into their songs, for instance) producing hits like, "Please, Please Me," "From Me to You," "She Loves You," "I Want to Hold Your Hand," and "Can't Buy Me Love."⁴⁴

The hip clearly recognized with whom the band aligned themselves, for the Beatles eschewed adult values and behavior, ridiculed the press, and directed their message explicitly at youth. "And mockers they are," proclaimed the *Los Angeles Free Press*. "They are hip, disrespectful, carefree, anti-patriotic, irreverent They challenge older generations to earn the respect they demand from kids—and so seldom deserve." Some right-wing religionists found the band dangerous. The Reverend David

⁴⁴ Belz, *The Story of Rock*, 124, 128; Farber, *Age of Great Dreams*, 61; Jon Wiener, *Come Together: John Lennon in His Time* (New York, 1984), 49.

A. Noebel, for instance, authored a pamphlet entitled, “Communism, Hypnotism and the Beatles: The Communist Music Master Plan,” in which he asserted that John, Paul, George, and Ringo were helping to bring about a Communist revolution through their music. “Throw your Beatle and rock and roll records in the city dump,” Noebel urged his readers. “Let’s make sure four mop-headed anti-Christ beatniks don’t destroy our children’s emotional and mental stability and ultimately destroy our nation.” For many young people, the arrival of the Beatles heralded the beginning of the sixties. “When I heard the Beatles for the first time, I knew something was happening. Something new. Something different. It was the first signal,” a baby-boomer recalled.⁴⁵

But the Beatles did not make a substantial impact on the counterculture until they released the albums *Rubber Soul* and *Revolver*. John Lennon began speaking out, espousing controversial opinions. He called the war in Vietnam “lousy” and “wrong” and said it “should be stopped,” while asserting that Christianity was on the decline and that the Beatles were “more popular than Jesus.” The band also started to compose under the influence of Dylan, LSD, and pot, which had a critical effect on the band’s sound and lyrics. They consciously made artier songs and wrote more introspective lyrics. Fewer formulaic love tunes appeared on their albums as the group treated a wider range of topics, experimented with new studio techniques, and incorporated new sound effects, backwards guitars, brass, and strings.⁴⁶

The Beatles released *Rubber Soul* in late 1965. The album’s cover featured a

⁴⁵ Fred Haines, “The Beatles Are Fun,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 1964; Rev. David A. Noebel, *Communism, Hypnotism and the Beatles: An Analysis of the Communist Use of Music, The Communist Mater Music Plan* (Tulsa, OK, 1965), 10-15; Rex Weiner and Deanne Stillman, *Woodstock Census: The Nationwide Survey of the Sixties Generation* (New York, 1979), 80.

⁴⁶ Doggett, *There’s A Riot Going On*, 13; Schaffner, *The Beatles Forever*, 49, 54-58.

surrealistic, distorted portrait of the group, the title stamped in bubbly and bulging psychedelic lettering in the corner. Lennon sang about himself in the third person on “Nowhere Man,” and the hip interpreted it as a put-down of traditional, conformist suburbanites who lacked a point of view. On “Norwegian Wood,” a song about a covert affair, Harrison introduced the sitar, an instrument that became familiar on many psychedelic albums. The Beatles had something to say on this album and prophetically proclaimed, “Say the word and you’ll be free . . . Have you heard? The Word is Love.” Millions of kids eventually agreed with this message.⁴⁷

On *Revolver*, released in 1966, the Beatles delved into the psychedelic. “Eleanor Rigby” made social commentary on the alienated “lonely people.” Other songs referenced dope. On “Tomorrow Never Knows,” Lennon sang lyrics inspired by Timothy Leary’s *The Psychedelic Experience*, a guidebook for acid trips based on *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*: “Turn off your mind; relax and float downstream,” “surrender to the void,” and “listen to the color of your dreams.” Paul’s “Got To Get You Into My Life” celebrated marijuana. “She Said, She Said,” was a cryptic retelling of an acid trip the Beatles had taken with Peter Fonda, while “Doctor Robert” lauded an acid connection who could make one “a new and better man” by taking a “drink from his special cup.”⁴⁸

The Rolling Stones invaded America through the breach the Beatles had opened. The band recorded African-American music, covering songs by Chuck Berry, Marvin

⁴⁷ Schaffner, *The Beatles Forever*, 49-50.

⁴⁸ Schaffner, *The Beatles Forever*, 62-64; Pichaske, *A Generation in Motion*, 187; Barry Miles, *Paul McCartney: Many Years From Now* (New York, 1997), 190.

Gaye, Wilson Pickett, and bluesmen Slim Harpo and Howlin' Wolf. Manager Andrew Loog Oldham purposefully cultivated an image for the Stones that ran directly counter to the Beatles' squeaky-clean public perception. In contrast to the innocent, lovable mop-tops who only wanted to hold a girl's hand, the Stones came off as scowling, menacing, ugly, street-toughened, cynical, and rude. They played blues-based rock that was dark, unsentimental, and overtly sexual. Their mega-hit "Satisfaction" appealed to youth because it spoke to teenage frustration, aggression, and the need for freedom, and sexual fulfillment. They became one of the most popular bands in America. Like the Beatles, the Stones experimented with psychedelic sounds and made references to dope. "Paint It Black," was gloomy, eastern flavored, sitar-driven psychedelia. On the song "19th Nervous Breakdown," the band referred to LSD as Mick Jagger sang, "On our first trip I tried so hard to rearrange your mind." "Mother's Little Helper" pointed out the hypocrisy of the respectable middle-class that condemned marijuana use among the young, while it abused prescription drugs.⁴⁹

Other artists recorded music that reflected countercultural anxieties, values, thoughts, and sentiments. Los Angeles quintet the Byrds birthed folk-rock with "Mr. Tambourine Man," combining Dylan's poetic lyrics with the Beatles' jangly, electric sound and harmonies. Folk artist Phil Ochs recorded the anti-Vietnam songs "I Ain't Marching Anymore," and "Draft Dodger Rag," while condemning America's role as global police in "Cops of the World." Buffy St. Marie castigated war and killing with

⁴⁹ Reebee Garofalo, *Rockin' Out: Popular Music in the U.S.A.* (Upper Saddle River, NJ, 2008), 185-187; Szatmary, *Rockin' In Time*, 122; Charlie Gillett, *The Sound of the City: The Rise of Rock and Roll* (New York, 1970), 316-317; Ken Goffman and Dan Joy, *Counterculture Through the Ages: From Abraham to Acid House* (New York, 2004), 263.

“Universal Soldier.” Barry Maguire sailed to the top of the charts with “Eve of Destruction,” which damned war, racism, hatred, and violence, and asserted that the world teetered on the brink of annihilation. The Who exploited the emerging generation gap. In “My Generation” they asked their elders, “Why don’t you all f-f-f-fade away?” In the same song Roger Daltry sings, “I hope I die before I get old.” Eric Burdon and the Animals declared, “We gotta get out of this place” because “daddy . . . been working and slaving his life away.”⁵⁰

Rock songs also increasingly made allusions to dope and dope experiences. Folk-rockers the Byrds flew “Eight Miles High,” and so did Donovan Leitch’s “Sunshine Superman.” Donovan also helped initiate a highly unproductive banana-peel smoking craze with “Mello Yello.” Bands shrouded references to marijuana in the name of a woman—the Stones’ “Lady Jane” and the Association’s “Along Comes Mary.” The folk trio Peter, Paul, and Mary recorded “Puff the Magic Dragon,” and listeners speculated whether “puff” was a verb. Paul Revere and the Raiders—the house band on Dick Clark’s television show—recorded the first anti-drug song, “Kicks,” which made the top ten.⁵¹

Popular musicians spearhead the counterculture in many respects, anticipating its styles, attitudes, and values. Dylan, the Beatles, Rolling Stones, and San Francisco acid-rockers assumed the hippie persona during the counterculture’s infancy, before it became a continental phenomenon. And because youth greatly valued rock and revered

⁵⁰ Doggett, *There’s A Riot Going On*, 62-63; Belz, *The Story of Rock*, 168-170; Goffman and Joy, *Counterculture Through the Ages*, 262.

⁵¹ Garofalo, *Rockin’ Out*, 197; Pichaske, *A Generation in Motion*, 119.

its performers, some imitated their heroes, following them right into the counterculture. A female dropout from San Francisco State described her transformation and those of her peers: “And there was Dylan and the Beatles and they were doing that electronic thing. And it sort of made us change,” she explained. “They kept us running after them, and running into a happier thing, and into a more joyful thing, a more colorful thing.” Similarly, a baby-boomer woman saw the Beatles as catalysts for bringing about the counterculture: “They seemed to pave the way for most of the changes in the 60’s—psychedelics, meditation, protest.”⁵²

While practicing its distinct values, the counterculture established alternative communities and that entailed founding counter-institutions. Dissatisfied graduate students and professors set-up “free universities” as an alternative to what they believed was the complete inadequacy of academia. Attendees usually paid no tuition or the lowest tuition rate possible. Largely unstructured, free universities focused on students, not research dollars, final exams, grades, credits, or syllabi. Classes offered to students and non-students—beatniks, hipsters, dropouts, and radicals—taught “new and radical scholarship analyzing American society in all its manifold sicknesses.” By spring 1966, Columbia, UC-Berkeley, Stanford, Michigan State, University of Florida, and colleges in Detroit, New York City, and Chicago, had established a “Free U.” These alternative educational institutions instructed on a wide variety of subjects—anarchism, Marxism, Christian existentialism, psychedelic drugs, American imperialism, modern cinema, and

⁵² Wolf, *Voices From the Love Generation*, 86; Weiner and Stillman, *Woodstock Census*, 81.

mass culture.⁵³

Other freaks founded intentional communities. Longhairs formed communes for many reasons. Most wanted to construct communities different from majority society in every conceivable way, environments where everyone worked and shared together, where people could be themselves, act on their impulses, do whatever they fancied. Escapism was also another major force behind commune building because alternative communities provided refuge from a society plagued by the military-industrial complex, war, racism, competition, consumerism, and daily drudgery.

Proto-hippies had lived communally. Ken Kesey and the Merry Pranksters, Timothy Leary and his counterparts at Millbrook, and John Sinclair and other artists at Trans-Love Energies had all lived together or near each other. In 1962, Amelia Newell opened up her land at Gorda Mountain near Big Sur to whoever wanted to live there and by the mid 1960s it became known as a good stopping point, crashpad, and drug-trading location for hippies traveling between Los Angeles and San Francisco. Hew Williams started Tolstoy Farm in Washington state in 1963, one of the first Sixties communes guided by anarchist principles. By 1966, hippies dwelled there, attracted to a community where one could grow marijuana and where no restrictions on nudity and sexual behavior existed.⁵⁴

The creation of Drop City inaugurated the era of back-to-the-land hippie commune building. Drop City, Timothy Miller has written, “brought together most of

⁵³ Stewart Albert, “Should Free University Be Grateful to Hearst?” *Berkeley Barb*, 4 September 1965; Brad Lang, “FUEL: The Torch is Passed,” *The Paper* (East Lansing), 7 April 1966.

⁵⁴ Miller, *The 60s Communes*, 17-30.

the themes that had been developing in other recent communities—anarchy, pacifism, sexual freedom, rural isolation, interest in drugs, art—and wrapped them flamboyantly into a commune not quite like any that had gone before.” Drop City originated when founders Eugene Bernofsky and his wife, along with Clark Richert, purchased five acres of goat pasture near Trinidad, Colorado on May 3, 1965. Bernofsky and company quested to create a new “civilization” where life and art intersected. The residents—“Droppers”—took new names, eschewed everything conventional, and welcomed others who sought to expand their cultural perspectives. After attending a lecture by Buckminster Fuller, the Droppers built Drop City’s defining features: geodesic domes. The communards worked diligently and creatively, building their homes with old telephone polls, tarpaper, bottle caps, stucco, and materials pulled from junkyards, including car tops. They even took apart abandoned railroad bridges for supplies. A true collective, Droppers shared everything—money, vehicles, clothing, and decision-making. They opposed leaders of any kind; members saw anarchy as good thing and individuals did as they pleased. Most busied themselves creating art, making comic books, films, paintings, statues large and small, sculptures, artistically painted furniture and clothing. Drop City, like other communes, opened its land to anyone and everyone.⁵⁵

While Droppers built geodesic domes, the counterculture emerged in San Francisco. Ironically, the famous San Francisco scene did not start in the Golden State at all, but three hours away, just over the Nevada border. Virginia City, a renovated

⁵⁵ Ibid., 31-37; quote on p. 31.

ghost town, was home to the Red Dog Saloon where a couple dozen artists and dopers from the Haight-Ashbury congregated in the Summer of 1965. The house band, the Charlatans, wore cowboy boots, straw boaters, and other Western apparel and played loud rock and roll. The staff of the Red Dog, dressed in Edwardian clothes, bodices, net-stockings, and ten-gallon hats, dropped psychedelics together on Monday evenings after the Red Dog closed. Soon, longhairs started to come to Virginia City from San Francisco, Reno, Seattle, and Portland.⁵⁶

The Virginia City experiment soon fizzled and the hippie district in San Francisco started to come to life in the fall of 1965. In the early sixties, latter-day beatniks began residing in the low rent Victorian houses in the slightly dilapidated Haight-Ashbury district on the periphery of Golden Gate Park. Many had migrated there after tourists, gangsters, and narcotics agents—narcs—overran their hangout in North Beach. Over the next several years, Berkeley radicals, artists, and musicians filtered into the area.⁵⁷

Describing the action on the Haight, the *San Francisco Examiner* put the term “hippie” into print for the first time on September 6, 1965. North of the Panhandle, hippies hung out at the Blue Unicorn, a coffee house that had a chessboard, books, music, art, free clothes, and a comfortable old sofa.⁵⁸

Dope, especially LSD, was plentiful in the “Haight.” Many denizens made a living selling marijuana and LSD. The district’s principal LSD manufacturer was

⁵⁶ Miles, *Hippie*, 28, 30; Perry, *Haight-Ashbury*, 7-11; Ward, Stokes, Tucker, *Rock of Ages*, 330.

⁵⁷ Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 141.

⁵⁸ Perry, *Haight-Ashbury*, 19-20; Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 141.

college dropout and Air Force veteran Augustus Owsley Stanley III, who gained legendary status in the Haight as a “bootleg chemist.” Owsley traveled with the Merry Pranksters before he and apprentice Tim Scully established an underground lab. The pair invested in a pill press and began turning out 250-milligram colored tablets—“white lightening,” “blue barrels,” and “orange sunshine.” Heads revered Owsley’s LSD for its purity and potency. Owsley is estimated to have produced some four million hits of acid in the mid sixties. Profits motivated Owsley, but he and his assistants believed in the power of psychedelics and wanted to help Hashbury residents with their “consciousness raising.”⁵⁹

As San Francisco emerged as a hippie center, the hip took to clubs, theatres, and art galleries, orchestrating happenings. In 1965, happenings usually involved art, film, theatre, music or poetry. The producers of these events flooded spectators’ minds and senses with sights and sounds intended to provoke an emotional experience. “It doesn’t matter whether you ‘understand’ or not,” asserted *The Open City Press*. “Sometimes the only thing to understand is that somebody is doing something—and you’re watching him do it.”⁶⁰

In Los Angeles, youth gathered in a natural outdoor amphitheatre to hear Hindu and experimental music. Others watched psychedelic films involving several movie and slide projectors operating simultaneously. Poets recited their work amid an cacophony of instruments and sounds—drums, whistles, flutes, horns, tapes played at half and

⁵⁹ Perry, *Haight-Ashbury*, 3-4, 75-76; Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 146-147; Eugene Anthony, *Summer of Love* (Milbrae, CA, 1980), 54.

⁶⁰ John Wilcock, “The Village Square,” *The Open City Press* (San Francisco), 3-9 February 1965.

double speed. Folk singers performed while speeches, sound effects, and commercials blasted from a tape player.⁶¹

In San Francisco, a theatre company put on a one-act play as a “kaleidoscopic web of changing colors” projected on the wall pulsed to music behind the performers. The Laughing Stock Gallery showed an experimental film accompanied by a variety of sounds—“scrapings, squeelings . . . unearthly wailings.” The Open Theatre did liquid projections on nude bodies.⁶²

Happenings at New York art galleries involved flashing neon lights, nude films, wigs hanging from ceilings, old phonographs playing ancient records, a partial motorcycle painted bright red, and a pair of glass eyes in a cup. In a New York basement club, the Psychedelic Theater simulated an LSD experience; jazz musicians improvised, while images of Mount Rushmore, a floating frog embryo, and Buddha moved in and out of focus.⁶³

In Boston, at a festival on Newbury Street, artists spattered shoes with paint and gave them away as souvenirs. Clowns wearing bowler hats and women wrapped in plastic smeared paint on a canvas with their hands, while one of the “happeners” hacked away at painted spaghetti.⁶⁴

As the hippies dropped out of the mainstream, attended happenings, diligently

⁶¹ Doc Stanley, “Poetry and Music Thing at Bowman-Mann Gallery,” and Paul Earls, “First Draco Concert,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 13 August 1965; “Total Theatre on Dec. 27,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 24 December 1965.

⁶² James Wojack, “A Pseudo-Psychedelic Eve in the ‘God Box,’” *The Open City Press* (San Francisco), 3-9 February 1965; “Symphony at Laughing Stock is a Bit Hard on the Nerves,” *The Open City Press* (San Francisco), 13-19 January 1965; Perry, *Haight-Ashbury*, 22.

⁶³ John Wilcock, “The Village Square,” *The Open City Press* (San Francisco), 3-9 February 1965; “Incense and Bass: LSD Show is S.R.O.,” *New York Times*, 11 April 1965, p. 58.

⁶⁴ Edgar J. Driscoll, Jr., “Art Has Its Festive Day on Newbury St,” *Boston Globe*, 3 May 1965, p. 17.

built their communities, and exercised their unconventional values, New Leftists protested the escalating war in Vietnam. As LBJ Americanized the war, sent more combat troops, and accelerated the draft, universities held “teach-ins,” 25,000 appeared at a SDS rally in Washington in April, and almost 100,000 protested in 80 cities in October 1965 during the International Days of Protest.

Most Americans did not differentiate between political activists and the counterculture, believing that those who wore long hair, beards, beads, and outrageous clothes belonged to a monolithic movement. In reality, significant tensions existed between the New Left—whose members engaged in overt political activism—and the counterculture—hippies who generally rejected political protest in favor of cultural radicalism and the quest for personal liberation.

These divergent approaches to dissent became obvious at a Berkeley Vietnam Day Committee rally in October 1965. Activists persuaded Allen Ginsberg to ask Bob Dylan to lead a demonstration. Dylan, like other counterculturalists, had no interest in protesting, and remarked, “There’s no left wing and right wing, just up wing and down wing.” Acidhead author Ken Kesey, however, participated. As he waited to speak, Kesey grew disturbed by the self-righteous rhetoric of the activists. There was no humor and the acerbic speeches seemed incongruous with a peace rally. Kesey took to the microphone wearing an orange Day-Glo windbreaker and World War I helmet and he lit into the crowd—“you’re not gonna stop this war with this rally, by marching.” Kesey then took out a harmonica and played “Home on the Range.” The Pranksters—decked out in Day-Glo, helmets, goggles, and flight suits—accompanied him on horns and

guitars. “Who invited this bastard?” shouted a VDC member. Kesey then leaned forward into the microphone and screamed, “There’s only one thing to do . . . And that’s everybody just look at it, look at the war, and turn your backs and say . . . Fuck it.” The crowd was stunned and confused; some booed. Kesey’s philosophy was similar to that of other cultural dissidents, those engaged in personal pursuits, reforming themselves, and changing the culture rather than government policy.⁶⁵

The counterculture and New Left found fault with the other. Many New Leftists saw counterculturalists as self-indulgent, silly, and doubted whether the counterculture and drugs could be revolutionary. Carl Oglesby of SDS recalled his hostility toward the hippies: “I was always annoyed at people who thought that the counterculture was in and of itself the revolution and that all we needed to do was all get high and listen to rock music change your head, that wasn’t a revolution.” Radical politicians viewed the counterculture as a diversion, its “isolating,” inward-turning tendencies impeding the organization of popular movements for change. Activists believed much was at stake; consequently, the hippies’ political indifference and their dropping out rankled demonstrators: “The cool world’s answer is ‘Do nothing,’ but that won’t do.”⁶⁶

The counterculture opposed the New Left’s approach to America’s problems. Although most hippies leaned Left, they generally opposed political activism. Most counterculturalists believed that protest failed to hasten change, that it was a waste of time and effort as demonstrations failed to influence the power elite. “I don’t see that

⁶⁵ Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 133-134; Dylan quoted on p. 134; Wolfe, *Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*, 221-224.

⁶⁶ Rebecca Klatch, *A Generation Divided: The New Left, the New Right, and the 1960s* (Berkeley, 1999), 136-137; Shea Were, “Seeing With the Other Eye: Cool and Uncool,” *Berkeley Barb*, 28 January 1966.

anything is to be gained by marching around with a sign or anything,” Jim McGuinn of the Byrds told a reporter. “I have sympathy for those people, of course. And so the hair (he touches his long blonde hair) is kind of a badge, to show which side I’m on, it comes to that.” In the San Francisco Bay area, four poets proposed “Gentle Thursday” as a way to protest the war, distributing leaflets that read: “Nobody listening to you? Stop yakking . . . Spend the day calmly. Be gentle. Be kind.” The strident ideology and militancy of protestors, combined with the negative vibes and energy that they produced, turned off passive hippies. Furthermore, the counterculture’s more radical members advocated cultural revolution—not political protest—as a better means of changing society. “Changing peoples’ heads” would lead to a more peaceful and harmonious world. Politics, culture, and society, cultural revolutionaries reasoned, would change only after individuals experienced personal revolutions, after their perceptions, values, and lifestyles changed. An ideal world free of hate, suspicion, jealousy, and competitiveness would emerge following mass personal revolutions. Cultural revolution would stop wars; demonstrations would not.⁶⁷

Hippies and New Leftists looked different, too. While hippies wore their hair long, donning beads, sandals, and strange and eclectic clothing, male New Leftists and activists looked conventional, wearing ties and maintaining short hair—even crewcuts. Female demonstrators wore neat shirtwaists, nylons, and flats. Many students were embarrassed by movement longhairs, as they disliked the beatnik image that the press

⁶⁷ McGuinn quoted in Tom Nolan, “The Frenzied Frontier of Pop Music,” *Los Angeles Times*, 27 November 1966, p. W36; “Hate War? Stay at Home on 1st ‘Gentle Thursday,’” *The Open City Press* (San Francisco), 17-23 March 1965; Anthony, *Magic of the Sixties*, 169; Thorne, “A Step Toward Sexual Freedom.”

attempted to stamp on the New Left. Many SDSers were outraged, for example, when the *New York Times Magazine* featured a story on the organization in November 1965 and published a photo of the only longhaired member in the office. The rest of the leadership was clean cut. Furthermore, some activists, especially those who had worked with the destitute, made a point of looking “like ordinary people” as “dressing in rags” was tantamount to “ridiculing poor people.”⁶⁸

New Leftists and hippies also viewed dope and drugs differently. In early 1966, authorities busted an Oklahoma chapter of SDS for smoking marijuana. As a result, most of the national leadership wanted to disassociate the organization from the renegade Oklahoma chapter. Vivian Rothstein, an early activist, became “very frightened” of drugs and “moved away from the drug culture” after some of her friends “fried their brains on LSD.” Other activists felt that drugs obscured the political vision and harmed the movement; therefore, they did not want drugs to be “associated with politics.” Tom Hayden, the most well-known New Leftist, did not respect the drug culture. A fellow activist recalled that Hayden felt the counterculture was a “joke.” Hayden did not go to many rock concerts, owned few albums, and remained a “straight man” all through the cultural revolution.⁶⁹

Meanwhile, happenings evolved, becoming less arts-oriented by the fall of 1965. Organizers introduced LSD and rock and roll into their events, transforming happenings from something that people experienced passively into events in which individuals

⁶⁸ Marty Jezer, *Abbie Hoffman: American Rebel* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1992), 97-98; Klatch, *A Generation Divided*, 137.

⁶⁹ Jezer, *Abbie Hoffman*, 98; Klatch, *A Generation Divided*, 137; David Farber, “The Counterculture and the Anti-War Movement,” in *Give Peace A Chance: Exploring the Vietnam Antiwar Movement*, ed. Melvin Small and William D. Hoover (Syracuse, NY, 1992), 12.

actively participated.

Held from December 1965 through January 1966, the “acid tests” put on by Ken Kesey and the Merry Pranksters became legendary. Kesey’s experimentation with mind-altering chemicals started in 1960 when he volunteered to be a guinea pig for a federally funded CIA psychotomimetic drug experiment; doctors introduced him to the psychedelics LSD, mescaline, Ditran, and a substance called IT-290. Soon Kesey and friends—including a young Jerry Garcia—were taking doses of LSD mixed with Venison Chili in the bohemian community Perry Lane in Palo Alto, California. With his royalties from his novel *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*, Kesey purchased a home fifty miles south of San Francisco in La Honda. There, he and his friends from Perry Lane ingested LSD together. For Kesey, acid removed unconscious barriers, allowing him and others to experience the present more fully.⁷⁰

The Merry Pranksters formed at La Honda. On June 14, 1964, Kesey and friends set out across America in a psychedelic 1939 International Harvester school bus with the word “FURTHUR” painted across the front and a sign on the back—“Caution: Weird Load.” Travel, they felt, provided a means to spiritual enlightenment; all were prepared for “the great freak forward.” The purpose of the journey was to go “furthur,” discover the unknown, experience whatever thoughts and actions might come as the result of an LSD trip, and to leave reality behind. They also intended to blow the minds of straights; they called it “tootling the multitudes.” As Kesey explained it, “The purpose of psychedelics is to learn the conditioned responses of people and then to prank them.

⁷⁰ Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 119-120; Perry, *On the Bus*, 11.

That's the only way to get people to ask questions, and until they ask questions they're going to remain conditioned robots." The Pranksters created new identities for themselves by painting their faces, dressing in masks, buckskin, capes, and taking new names—Sir Speed Limit, Mal Function, Intrepid Traveler, Sensuous X, and Mountain Girl.⁷¹

While on this freaky LSD-drenched voyage the Pranksters happened to drop by Millbrook, New York to visit acid guru Timothy Leary. But the former Harvard psychologist did not come out of his 64-room mansion to greet them. He had been tripping for three days and did not want to be interrupted. They did eventually meet in an affable atmosphere but it became apparent that a massive schism in the attitudes and styles existed between the Pranksters and Leary's International Foundation for Internal Freedom (IFIF). Serious behavioral scientists worked for IFIF; they took notes on their drug experiences, gave lectures, and published a journal. They had "nothing to gain by associating with a bunch of grinning, filthy bums wearing buckskins and face paint." The feeling was mutual as the Pranksters scoffed at IFIF's scholarly stuffiness. Kesey abhorred structured acid taking sessions, finding them unnecessary as the drug's effects could be unharnessed anywhere—among family, at a rock concert, at a party, on a bus. Turned off, the Pranksters drove home. Back at La Honda, Kesey hosted his legendary LSD parties for the Hell's Angels motorcycle club in the summer of 1965. The Pranksters and the Angels dropped acid, drank beer, and blasted Bob Dylan albums.⁷²

Kesey and his crazy coterie were proto-hippies, some of the first

⁷¹ Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 121-123, Kesey quoted on p. 121.

⁷² Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 123-124; Perry, *Haight-Ashbury*, 14-15.

counterculturalists, yet they had no effect on the counterculture's genesis. They did, however, exhibit hippie values before most others; they revered dope as a pathway to enlightenment and valued experience, spontaneity, theatrics, colorful costumes, living for the present, while maintaining an apolitical disposition. But the Pranksters weird behavior did not generate converts for the counterculture. Most did not know of the Pranksters outside of the San Francisco Bay area.

Kesey wanted to share the LSD experience with others and to create an alternative reality, resulting in the acid tests. "They were attempts to engage people in their senses so totally as to make it as transformational experience through sensory overload," Richard Alpert remembered. "It was an attempt to overload one dimension so much that it forced people into another dimension." Kesey and the Pranksters advertised their LSD parties, asking prospective participants, "Can You Pass the Acid Test?" Youth responded enthusiastically. The first test occurred at a bookstore in Santa Cruz on November 27, 1965, followed by several others held throughout December and early January 1966. Nearly 400 showed up at the second test held at a private home in San Jose; 200 attended a third in Mountain View. A fourth unfolded at Muir Beach north of San Francisco. Over 2,000 appeared for a test at the Fillmore Auditorium in January 1966. The atmosphere was similar at all the tests. Chemist Augustus Owsley Stanley III supplied plenty of LSD and the Warlocks—soon to be the Grateful Dead—provided the music. Lights danced on walls, tape machines sputtered strange noises, and kids tripping on acid danced. Allen Ginsberg sang Buddhist and Hindu mantras, while Neal Cassady and Ken Babbs rapped and chanted into microphones. The Pranksters

played avant-garde music and showed the film they had made on their cross-country bus trip over a year earlier. “The room is a spaceship and the captain has lost his mind,” Kesey proclaimed at one of the tests.⁷³

A three-day LSD extravaganza took the acid tests to a new level: The Trips Festival. Organized by biologist Stewart Brand—who later compiled the *Whole Earth Catalog*—the festival unfolded at Longshoreman’s Hall on the San Francisco waterfront in January 1966. The Trips festival was an experience complete with wild, liberated dancing, strobe lights and black lights, microphones that anyone could speak into, high-decibel psychedelic rock, painted bodies, costumes of all kinds, trampolines, guerrilla theater, five film projectors operating simultaneously. Kesey, dressed in a silver spacesuit and bubble helmet, made random comments into a microphone; he also put up a message on the projector: “Anyone who knows he is God please go up on stage.” Dopers stayed high, dipping into tubs of acid-spiked Kool-Aid. “Thousands of people, man, all helplessly stoned, all finding themselves in a room of thousands of people, none of whom any of them were afraid of. It was magic, far-out beautiful magic,” recalled Jerry Garcia. Months later on Halloween night, roughly 200 patrons watched the Pranksters receive diplomas at the “Acid Test Graduation.”⁷⁴

Dancehall rock concerts eclipsed happenings in 1966. After the Trips Festival, dancehall concerts were held regularly on weekends and became countercultural institutions in the San Francisco Bay. Probably the most important concert promoter

⁷³ Perry, *On the Bus*, 151; Miles, *Hippie*, 54, 96; Perry, *Haight-Ashbury*, 33-48; Kesey quoted in Martin Torgoff, *Can’t Find My Way Home: America in the Great Stoned Age, 1945-2000* (New York, 2004), 119.

⁷⁴ Miles, *Hippie*, 96; Torgoff, *Can’t Find My Way Home*, 125; Kesey and Garcia quoted in Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 143-144; Perry, *Haight-Ashbury*, 99-100.

was Bill Graham. Born Wolfgang Grajonca, Graham had escaped Nazi Germany as a child and grew up in the Bronx. He managed the San Francisco Mime Troupe before taking up concert promotion. After a bitter struggle to obtain a permit, Graham started producing shows at the Fillmore Auditorium. Although he became central to the San Francisco counterculture, he did not take dope; he wanted to make money and saw a lucrative opportunity in boosting the dance hall scene.⁷⁵

Chet Helms was another hip capitalist. He had hitchhiked from Texas to the Haight in the early 1960s with a young blues singer named Janis Joplin who would sing with Big Brother and the Holding Company, a group Helms would manage. Unlike Graham, Helms lived the hippie lifestyle, integrating himself fully into the Haight-Ashbury community. He was the third manager of the Family Dog, an organization that put on concerts. Helms used dope, operated his business like a commune, and did not charge some people admission to shows. He started his business activity holding Tuesday Night Jam Sessions at a Victorian mansion at 1090 Page Street. He then presented shows at the Fillmore in conjunction with Bill Graham. After a falling out with Graham, Helms opened the Avalon Ballroom to compete with the Fillmore.⁷⁶

The freaks attending shows at the Fillmore, Avalon, Winterland, Matrix, and dancehalls elsewhere had similar experiences. The dancehall concerts were social happenings where the hip community came together, psychedelic drugs flowed freely, and heads experienced cosmic visions. The bands played ear-drum-shattering

⁷⁵ James Henke and Parke Puterbaugh, eds., *I Want to Take You Higher: The Psychedelic Era, 1965-1969* (San Francisco, 1997), 91; Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 144; Torgoff, *Can't Find My Way Home*, 125; Miles, *Hippie*, 99-100.

⁷⁶ Miles, *Hippie*, 99-100; Anthony, *Magic of the Sixties*, 133-135.

psychedelic rock as hippies engaged in “expressionistic writhing and free-form twirling, in the dark or under stroboscopic lights that might hit a hypnotic rhythm as they turned the dancers into a series of flashing snapshots.” People covered in Day-Glo paint grooved under ultra-violet lights. High on dope, they wore strange costumes, bright clothing, beads, and buttons bearing messages: “Alice designs her face on my mind.” Light-show artists beamed liquid projections, colored lights, kaleidoscopic patterns, and slides of faces or flowers onto the walls. Despite the light shows and eclectic crowds, youth came to see the main attractions, the local bands that gained notoriety for producing the “San Francisco Sound:” Big Brother and the Holding Company, Grateful Dead, Quicksilver Messenger Service, Country Joe and the Fish, Jefferson Airplane, Moby Grape, Sopwith Camel. Guitarists improvised, playing meandering 45-minute solos and audiences enjoyed feedback emanating from the musicians’ amplifiers. Acid rockers explored and experimented with sounds to create an atmosphere. “With the use and control of feedback we can get the sound so big that you don’t hear the music, you feel it; and you don’t dance to it; you dance in it,” explained Robin Tyner, vocalist for the Detroit band MC-5. John Sinclair testified to the magic created by the interactions between the crowd and the artists: “The vibrations coming at the musicians from the audience merge with their own vibrations to form a huge human pulsation that surpasses what most people know as ‘music’ to take over the whole hall and turn everyone there, finally, into pure human freaks.”⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Henke and Puterbaugh, eds., *I Want to Take You Higher*, 91-96; Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 145; Franklin Bach, “Bach on Rock,” *The Fifth Estate* (Detroit), 16-31 October 1966; John Sinclair, “The Coatpuller,” *The Fifth Estate* (Detroit), 15-30 November 1966.

While hippies grooved to ear-drum shattering acid rock, the inaugural issue of several underground papers appeared in 1966. In an effort to share “the news that the middle-class press won’t print or can’t find,” a hip Associated Press, the *Underground Press Syndicate (UPS)* was established in the summer. In August, the first underground in the Southwest appeared—Austin’s *Rag*—which appealed to political hippies and hip politicians. In October, a group of poets and artists started a paper explicitly devoted to matters of culture, *The San Francisco Oracle*. It printed articles on everything from yoga to eastern mysticism to astrology. By the end of the year, *Underground* had appeared in Arlington, Virginia, as had the *Washington Free Press* in the nation’s capital, *The Illustrated Paper* in Mendocino, California, *Vanguard* in San Francisco, *Graffiti* in Philadelphia, and Richard Fairfield’s *The Modern Utopian*, a publication focused on experimental communities.⁷⁸

The countercultural commune building that began with Drop City intensified in the lead-up to the Summer of Love. Intentional communities mushroomed in California, New Mexico, and the Northeast. Near Los Angeles, in Sunland, Hugh Romney—also known as Wavy Gravy—established Hog Farm, a free-form hippie community; diets consisted of brown rice and other veggies, community clothing was stacked in the back of an abandoned car, communards freely indulged in dope, and on Sundays they staged happenings. To the North in Sonoma County, ex-professional-musician Lou Gottlieb opened his land to settlers, creating one of the most storied hippie communes: Morning Star Ranch. At Morning Star residents engaged in yoga, free love, meditation, read the

⁷⁸ Peck, *Uncovering the Sixties*, 37-40, 58-59; Allan Katzman quoted on p. 39.

works of Asian spiritualists, strolled the grounds naked, and took psychedelic drugs. In the Northeast, a group founded Sunrise Hill in Massachusetts, while in New Mexico communitarians created Lower Farm, Sun Farm, Drop South, Towapa, and Placitas.⁷⁹

Thousands of communes of the urban variety—crashpads—also came into existence. Crashpads provided a place where people could stay for a night, a day, a month. Crashpads were very disorganized, often consisting of an empty space where anyone could live or sleep among perhaps dozens of others. In New York City’s East Village, hippies bedded down at the most famous urban collective—Galahad’s Pad. On the West coast, crashpads abounded in the Haight-Ashbury where they often served as counterculture induction centers. According to Jay Stephens:

Your first night in the Haight was usually spent in one of the many communal crashpads, sandwiched together with a dozen friendly strangers. Your inhibitions and frequently your virginity were the first things to go, followed by your clothes and your old values—a progressive shedding that was hastened along by your first acid trip.⁸⁰

Hippies held the first outdoor celebrations—“be-ins” or “love-ins”—shortly after the dance-hall concerts began taking off. Hippies had gathered on the hills behind Haight-Ashbury at dawn on June 21, 1966 to usher in the Summer Solstice, but the first major outdoor gathering of consequence was the Love Pageant Rally. Sitting near a café window in September 1966, *Oracle* editor Allan Cohen had an epiphany after witnessing a group of demonstrators pass by. He and Michael Bowen believed protest created

⁷⁹ Miller, *60s Communes*, 41-43, 46-53, 59-63.

⁸⁰ Miller, *60s Communes*, 44-46; Jay Stephens, *Storming Heaven: LSD and the American Dream* (New York, 1987), 305.

negative energy and caused a negative response. Why not hold a celebration instead? “If people aren’t demonstrating for civil rights violations, it’s the war in Vietnam. We should be able to turn some of that negative energy into something more positive.”

Cohen’s sudden revelation evolved into the Love Pageant Rally, held on October 6, 1966, the same day California outlawed LSD. The “666” held special significance for the Oracle staff. In the Bible “666” symbolizes the Anti-Christ. The Love Pageant planners saw this as a portent—the government’s criminalization of acid was demonic! Flyers advertising the event included a “Prophecy of a Declaration of Independence,” a clear articulation of hippie values: “We hold these experiences to be self-evident, that all is equal, that the creation endows us with certain inalienable rights, that among these are: the freedom of the body, the pursuit of joy, and the expansion of consciousness.” The Love Pageant Rally, according to the leaflet, would be “the first translation of this prophesy into political action.” Like happenings and dancehall concerts, the rally brought hip people together, strengthening the sense of community. The rally was also an open celebration of psychedelic drugs. The organizers encouraged people to bring children, flowers, flutes, drums, beads, flags, incense, and joy. A few thousand people made merry in the Panhandle next to Golden Gate Park as the Grateful Dead and Big Brother played for free. As the master of ceremonies read a manifesto, hundreds swallowed a tab of acid at the same time. In New York City on the same day, psychedelists gathered at Tompkins Square Park for “Love: A Psychedelic Celebration.” They brought children, flowers, flags, incense, and sang Hare Krishna with an elderly

Swami from India.⁸¹

Anti-war protestors, civil rights demonstrations, and “beatniks” triggered a backlash from majority society. Many middle-class Americans found protestors and shaggy kids dirty and questioned their patriotism. “If they’d only take a bath, I wouldn’t care what they did,” one commented, while another asserted, “I think if they really believed in America they’d shave.” Former President Eisenhower, too, expressed displeasure. “All this long hair, this lack of decorum . . . I’ve always thought that sloppy dress was indicative of sloppy thinking.” Ike was also disgusted with the appearance of young women whose hair hung down “over their faces so they look like baboons.” Many others shared Ike’s opinions. A Harris poll taken in the fall of the 1965 demonstrated that Americans disapproved of non-conformists. Two-thirds of the adult public thought that anti-war and civil rights demonstrators were “harmful to the American way of life.” Over half felt the same way about men with long hair and beards. Of course not everyone disapproved of social and political dissidents; some adults sympathized with young as they, too, expressed concerns about the issues facing the country. “It is difficult to tell a kid he may lose his mind with LSD when he knows he can have his whole head blown off in Vietnam,” a professor remarked. An Iowa truckdriver commented, “I get a big kick outa hearin’ about ‘em, the drugs and shacking up together and givin’ the big guys hell. Maybe the kids will come up with something

⁸¹ Anthony, *Summer of Love*, 122; Cohen quoted in Anthony, *Magic of the Sixties*, 169; Leaflet in Perry, *Haight-Ashbury*, 92-93; Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 149; Don McNeill, *Moving Through Here* (New York, 1970), 23.

good if they give ‘em a chance.”⁸²

The hippies, however, cared little about what adults and other mainstream Americans thought of them. Countercultural activity burgeoned on the coasts. “There are literally thousands of young people,” declared the *East Village Other* in the summer of 1966, “who have, in one form or another, dropped out of the system to the extent of just barely existing on its borders and who would benefit once and for all by seceding from the union.”⁸³

In Los Angeles, the Sunset Strip and the surrounding area became a focal point for the hip community, a “battlefield of the current social revolution,” as one frequenter called it. Hip youth hung out at Whiskey A-Go-Go, the Trip, Barney’s Beanery, the Galaxy, Ben Franks, Pandora’s Box, Cantor’s, Bido Lito’s, the Fred C. Dobbs, and the London Fog. At the “acid bars,” hippies tripped, meditated, and danced. Youth also crammed into clubs to see the local bands: Love, the Doors, the Byrds, Frank Zappa and the Mothers of Invention, Buffalo Springfield, the Lovin’ Spoonful. Vito and the Freaks, a free-form dance troupe, accompanied the Byrds and Mothers of Invention, dancing at their gigs. Concertgoers attended the Shrine Auditorium where acid rock bands jammed. The crowd shouted, “Freak out! Freak Out!” as they grooved, strobe lights flashing, swirling colors and drawings projected on the walls. A dope culture developed at nearby UCLA where an estimated 20 percent of the campus had tried

⁸² Art Buchwald, “Rub-a-Dub-Dub: All Those Demonstrators Oughta Be Dunked in a Tub,” *The Washington Post*, 25 April 1965, p. E7; Eisenhower quoted in Joseph P. Dinneen Jr., “Across the City Desk: Ike So Right On Beatniks,” *Boston Globe*, 17 October 1965, p. 78; Louis Harris, “Public Registers Strong Disapproval of Nonconformity,” *The Washington Post*, 27 September 1965, p. A2; Professor quoted in Gavzer, “New Kicks on the College Campus?” p. FC1; Truck driver quoted in J.L. Simmons and Barry Winograd, *It’s Happening: A Portrait of the Youth Scene Today* (Santa Barbara, CA, 1966), 76.

⁸³ Quoted in Leamer, *The Paper Revolutionaries*, 40.

marijuana and five percent had taken LSD.⁸⁴

Merry Prankster Ken Babbs and Hugh Romney organized a series of acid tests in Los Angeles in early 1966. Again, Stanley Owsley III provided the LSD. The first took place at a Unitarian Church where attendees ate acid-spiked bowls of pineapple chili. The second unfolded near Watts and it did not go well as many people had “bad trips,” the result of overdoses. Others tests took place in Hollywood.⁸⁵

Like San Francisco, the Los Angeles counterculture had an artistic contingent. Four actors and writers made up the Firesign Theatre, which specialized in recording and radio. They made multi-layered surrealistic recordings featuring the works of James Joyce mixed with sound samples from television shows and old films. They also hosted a late-night free-form talk radio show entitled “Radio Free Oz” on channel KPFK that showcased prominent artistic people.⁸⁶

An early event that produced alienation—creating more freaks for hippiedom—occurred when middle-class youth and police clashed on the Sunset Strip in November 1966. Teenagers and students gathered at Pandora’s Box, a popular coffee shop, to read poetry and play folk music. In an effort to widen the street, city planners decided to demolish the building. The closing of Pandora’s Box, coupled with stringent curfew laws and police harassment, set off a week of demonstrations and riots. Young adults protested police harassment, carrying signs, “Freedom for all on the Strip,” and “Don’t Hurt Us; We’re Your Children.” On the most violent night, 2,000 kids flooded the

⁸⁴ Jerry Hopkins, “Making It on the Strip,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 24 December 1965; Miles, *Hippie*, 62, 65, 136-137; Richard Goldstein, “On Sunset Strip,” *Boston Globe*, p. 8; Nolan, “Frenzied Frontier of Pop Music.”

⁸⁵ Miles, *Hippie*, 129.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 132.

street. Musical duo Sonny and Cher sat down with others, causing massive traffic jams. Police formed flying wedges, charged the crowd, and arrested 300, including Peter Fonda. Rioters overturned a car, threw rocks and bottles, and tried setting fire to a bus. Filmmakers hastily shot the movie, *Riot on Sunset Strip*. John Wilcox, publisher of the underground *Other Scenes*, believed he had witnessed the initial stirrings of a social revolution after viewing the film and prophetically proclaimed: “The opening shots were fired in California last month in a war that is going to engage America’s attention increasingly in the next few years. It is going to be a civil war that may or may not be bloodless, but that will certainly revolutionise the lives and habits of everybody in America.” Inspired by the events, Stephen Stills of Buffalo Springfield penned the song “For What Its Worth:”

There’s something happenin’ here
A-what it is ain’t exactly clear
There’s a man with a gun over there
A-tellin’ me I’ve got to beware

There are battle lines bein’ drawn
Nobody’s right if everybody’s wrong
Young people speaking their minds
Getting’ so much resistance from behind

I think it’s time we stop children, what’s that sound
Everybody look what’s goin’ down⁸⁷

On the other coast, in New York City, the Lower East Side—known as the East Village—became a vibrant countercultural enclave complete with experimental art, film,

⁸⁷ Miles, *Hippie*, 140-145; “Youths Again Rally Along Sunset Blvd.,” *Los Angeles Times*, 16 November 1966, p. 3; Pete Johnson, “400 Youths on Strip Hold ‘Brutality’ Protest,” *Los Angeles Times*, 19 November 1966, p. 19; “Youth: Sunset Along the Strip,” *Time*, 2 December 1966, 69; Wilcox quoted in Doggett, *There’s A Riot Going On*, 66-67; Stephen Stills, “For What It’s Worth,” Buffalo Springfield, ATCO SD33-200.

music, and theatre. When the hippies arrived, they moved into ramshackle tenements alongside Poles, Ukrainians, and Puerto Ricans. The corner of Third Avenue represented the entrance to the hippie community. Along the sidewalks, freaks preached free love, pacifism, and pontificated on the benefits of LSD. Others sang songs, read poetry aloud, or engaged in street theatre. In Tompkins Square Park, longhairs pounded on bongo drums, danced, and chanted Krishna mantras daily. Popular hippie hangouts included the bars Old Reliable, the Dom, and the Annex; artists and writers preferred Stanley's. Numerous coffee houses, avant-garde theaters, and underground movie venues also dotted the Village. Along St. Marks Place, hip youth scored dope and drugs and purchased items at specialty shops—beads, posters, drug paraphernalia, second-hand books, and clothing. And they could grab a bite at the Psychedelicatessen, a local eatery.⁸⁸

Artists thrived in New York. Claes Oldenburg and Robert Rauschenburg staged happenings, inviting audiences to participate. Andy Warhol was the most famous artist in the Village. He surrounded himself with young dopers, including the band the Velvet Underground. The Velvets were different than the West coast hippies as they dressed in black, wore black sunglasses, and popped amphetamines; lead singer Lou Reed shot heroin. Warhol hired the band to provide the music for an experiment he called the *Exploding Plastic Inevitable* that included the simultaneous use of films, lights, projections, and dancing.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Christopher Mele, *Selling the Lower East Side: Culture, Real Estate, and Resistance in New York City* (Minneapolis, 2000), 153-166.

⁸⁹ Mele, *Selling the Lower East Side*, 62; Miles, *Hippie*, 148-152.

New York was also home to the band the Fugs whose members included Ed Sanders, Tuli Kupferberg, and Ken Weaver. Publisher and poet Sanders owned the Peace Eye Bookstore that served as the band's headquarters. Kupferberg, a pacifist-anarchist, published the magazine *Yeah*; its slogan was "Fuck for peace." The Fugs fused cultural radicalism with political protest, a melding the Yippies accomplished later. The self-described "fantastic protest rock n' roll peace-sex-psychedelic singing group" merged the artistic with the vitality of the civil rights and anti-war movements. The Fugs wrote and performed the sexually themed songs "Group Grope," "Coca Cola Douche" and "What Are You Doing After the Orgy?" Numbers like "Horny Cunt-Hunger Blues" were integral to what Sanders called a "Total Assault on the Culture (anti-war/anti-creep/anti-repression)." Their repertoire included the satirical anti-war tunes "Kill For Peace" and "Strafe Them Creeps in the Rice Paddy Daddy." One evening at the Bridge Theatre, the Fugs held a "Night of Napalm," performing their political anti-war numbers. Over loud feedback, the Fugs screamed, "Kill! Kill!" before heaving red-dyed spaghetti over themselves and the audience. "For a joke, the Fugs were OK," concluded Sanders.⁹⁰

As New York, San Francisco, and Los Angeles developed hippie communities, organizations devoted to sexual freedom proliferated. Richard Thorne, a 29-year old African-American and head of the East Bay Sexual Freedom League, promoted and organized orgies attended by UC-Berkeley and San Francisco State students. At least six such orgies, involving between 20 and 45 participants each, occurred in the spring of

⁹⁰ Miles, *Hippie*, 156-158; Doggett, *There's A Riot Going On*, 21-22, Sanders quoted on p. 22; Sanders quoted in Peck, *Uncovering the Sixties*, 16.

1966. The University of California Sexual Freedom Forum sold buttons—“TAKE IT OFF”—and handed out information on birth control, abortion, and sexually transmitted diseases. Other sexual freedom committees and organizations formed at Stanford and UCLA. In Austin, the Texas Student League for Responsible Sexual Freedom called for an end to taboos and “archaic” laws. The organization’s policy maintained that “any consensual sex act between adults which did not involve force or physical harm” should not be illegal. The League applied this policy to fornication, sodomy, miscegenation, and adultery. The University eventually expelled the group from campus.⁹¹

The most serious and revolutionary counterculturalists were the Diggers. Their story began with R. G. Davis’s San Francisco Mime Troupe, an organization that combined avant-garde theatre with radical politics. A faction of actors within the Mime Troupe broke off to form the Diggers in the summer of 1966. Several of the Mime Troupe actors had become disgruntled with the Troupe’s political satire and well-treaded left-wing ideas. The Diggers took their name from a 17th Century anarchistic group that had confiscated common land in Surrey, England in protest of high food prices. They ridiculed Leftists who championed Cuba, China, and Vietnam as social models, but they also scoffed at acidheads and their mystical visions. The dozen men and women who founded the Diggers were cultural revolutionaries and activists working to make their alternative social vision a reality. No one person acted as leader or spokesperson. If someone asked who was in charge, they responded, “You are!” The Diggers believed that people could make a better world if they tried. They wanted more than to

⁹¹ “Students: The Free-Sex Movement,” *Time*, 11 March 1966, 66; Gary Chason, “Sexual Freedom League: The Naked Truth,” *The Rag* (Austin), 17 August 1966.

redistribute wealth to the masses; they sought freedom from what they considered to be the foundations of civilization: hierarchy, money, profits, power, and private property. And free was a basic principle—free food, free clothes, free everything. Beginning in the autumn of 1966 and continuing on a daily basis for over a year, the Diggers handed out free meals in the Panhandle. Hungry hippies and dropouts walked through an orange scaffold—a “Free Frame of Reference”—to get their grub. They also set up a Free Store, a free medical service, and crashpads for the multitudes of young dropouts who flooded the Hashbury. Opposed to profits, the Diggers even set out a basket containing “free money,” while urging hippies to resist the “money game.” They endorsed ignoring the law; they called this “assuming freedom.” The media got the Diggers wrong. They were not a charity organization, but were indeed attempting to initiate an alternative collectivist society. By inserting “free” into all their activities, the Diggers engaged in artistic street theater as “free” represented a kind of “social acid” that provoked revelations, making people question the dominant culture’s consumerism and morality.⁹²

By late 1966, the Haight was booming. Earlier, brothers Ron and Jay Thelin had opened the Psychedelic Shop, determined to disseminate information on acid. The shop was a doper’s dream as a head could buy records, books, smoking implements, fabrics, bamboo flutes, and psychedelic poster art. It soon became a hippie hangout, a refuge for street people, a place to trade and talk dope or browse the community bulletin board. Hippies enjoyed a cup of coffee at I/Thou and ate at the Drog Store Café, Bob’s Restaurant, and Quasar’s. They bought jewelry, incense, and rolling papers at the

⁹² Miles, *Hippie*, 106; Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 170-175; Perry, *Haight-Ashbury*, 105.

Phoenix, posters at the Print Mint, and hip clothing at In Gear, Mnasidika, and the Blushing Peony. Far Fetched Foods sold health food. Annex 13 sold books, and Chickie P. Garbanza Bead, and Storm Door Company sold supplies for bead stringers. To get away from the hustle and bustle of the city, youth retreated to “Hippie Hill” in Golden Gate Park to play guitar, smoke a joint, make friends, and score dope.⁹³

New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco were the largest and most visible countercultural centers, but hippies started appearing elsewhere. A dope culture developed at major coastal universities—Harvard, Berkeley, UCLA, NYU, Brown, and San Francisco State. By 1966, some students were experimenting with mind-altering substances in the Midwest and the Southwest. At the University of Wisconsin, young men and women gathered in dorm rooms for weekly “pot parties” and they also hung a sign on a fence: “LSD: YOUR CAMPUS TRAVEL AGENT—ONE TRIP IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS.” At the University of Texas in Austin, “Gentle Thursday” became a weekly ritual gathering on campus. Organizers urged students to “do exactly what they want,” and that included having fun, picnicking, playing music, reading poetry, flying kites. At the very least, the organizers insisted, students should “wear brightly coloured clothing.” In Detroit, the hip congregated on Plum Street. In August 1966, John Sinclair’s Detroit Artists’ Workshop hosted a “Festival of People” or “a summer ecstasy of the contemporary arts.” The festival celebrated “PEOPLE—ourselves,” and featured several bands, poetry readings, a photography exhibition, and films. Detroit, like San Francisco, developed a psychedelic dancehall scene. Bands such

⁹³ Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 148; Wolfe, *The Hippies*, 57; Perry, *Haight-Ashbury*, 72-75, 89, 102, 104; Anthony, *Summer of Love*, 74.

as the MC-5, the Chosen Few, and the Woolies jammed at the Grande Ballroom, while the lightshow artists High Society beamed “throbbing amoeba-like” projections behind the performers.⁹⁴

As 1966 drew to a close, the counterculture was poised to explode. The Buffalo Springfield was right: there really was “something happenin’” and keen observers in San Francisco, New York, and Los Angeles knew it. The next spring, the rest of the nation would know it, too.

⁹⁴ “Essay: LSD” *Time*, 17 June 1966; Advertisement in *The Rag* (Austin), 31 October 1966; “Festival for People,” *Fifth Estate* (Detroit), 30 July 1966; Gary Grimshaw, “Detroit Freaks Out With First Participatory Zoo Dance,” *Fifth Estate* (Detroit), 16-31 October 1966.

CHAPTER IV
THE AGE OF AQUARIUS ASCENDANT AND THE QUINTESSENTIAL
COUNTERCULTURE, 1967-1969

“Who is the Underground? You are, if you think, dream, work, and build towards the improvements and changes in your life, your social and personal environments, towards the expectations of a better existence.”—*Avatar* (Boston)¹

In August 1969, between 400,000 and 500,000 counterculturalists gathered at the Woodstock Music and Art Fair on Max Yasgur’s 600-acre dairy farm near Bethel, New York, for “three days of peace and music.” Michael Lang, one of the festival’s producers, contended that Woodstock symbolized the new culture’s break from the old generation and the old culture. He also strongly insinuated that the festival represented a blueprint for the new society. “You see how they function on their own—without cops, without guns, without clubs, without hassles. Everybody pulls together and everybody helps each other.” Whatever transpired when the people returned to the city, Lang asserted, “this thing has happened and it proves that it can happen.” A few years earlier, Woodstock would have been unimaginable.²

It occurred because the counterculture exploded in the late sixties, growing exponentially. At mid decade, hippies numbered in the tens of the thousands.

¹ “Who Is the Underground?” *Avatar* (Boston), 9-22 June 1967.

² Lang quoted in Bruce J. Schulman, *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics* (New York, 2001), 18.

According to press reports, that number increased to a core of about 200,000 “full-time hippies” by 1968, with an additional 300,000 that held and practiced hippie values. By the turn of the decade, millions of freaks, dropouts, and communards populated every region of the country.³

In the late sixties, the quintessential counterculture bloomed; this was the counterculture in its purest form—the Human Be-In, Haight-Ashbury, Summer of Love, flower power, the I-Ching, *Sergeant Pepper*, Woodstock, Altamont, daisies in rifle barrels. The hippies diligently constructed the new society during this time of optimism, faith, peace, and love—the Age of Aquarius—and, as the counterculture burgeoned, its values became more numerous, sophisticated, and nuanced, and its manifestations evolved as well, from love-ins to massive multi-day rock festivals to “back-to-the-land” commune building.

Hippiedom spread across the country in 1967, taking root in nearly every city and university. A partial blending of the New Left and counterculture occurred as “the movement” confronted obstinate national political leaders committed to prolonging the Vietnam War. More hippies joined anti-war protests, while more New Leftists embraced hippie practices and styles. On the whole, however, the counterculture and New Left remained separate and distinct strains of the youth rebellion. In the late 1960s, the counterculture consisted of cultural dissidents—hippie purists—and hybrid counterculturalists—those who welded political and cultural radicalism, who were equal parts hippie and New Leftist, such as the Youth International Party and the White

³ Hippie numbers in Terry H. Anderson, *The Sixties*, 4th ed (New York, 2012), 117.

Panther Party. A contentious debate within the counterculture and the larger movement ensued as factions grappled with one another over the question of how best to change their world. By 1969, the counterculture grew ever larger, as Richard Nixon ascended to the presidency, the war continued, and political revolution and politics seemed a dead-end.

San Francisco's Human Be-In announced the arrival of the counterculture, while marking the start of its unprecedented growth. The Be-Ins organizers—a group associated with the underground paper the *Oracle*—hoped to bring Berkeley political activists and the “love generation” of the Haight-Ashbury together, groups that disagreed on approaches to liberation. Painter Michael Bowen and the *Oracle* staff also sought to turn Berkeley's radical Left on to psychedelics. Bowen suggested that Jerry Rubin, a leader of the Vietnam Day protest, represent the activist community. The promoters made grand predictions for the Be-In. “In unity we shall shower the country with waves of ecstasy and purification,” announced the *Berkeley Barb*. “Fear will be washed away; ignorance will be exposed to sunlight; profits and empire will lie drying on deserted beaches; violence will be submerged and transmuted in rhythm and dancing.” Bringing the New Left and counterculture together was only one of the Be-In's objectives, for it also celebrated the local hip community, the psychedelic way of life, and the “reaffirmation of the life spirit.”⁴

On January 14, 1967, “A Gathering of the Tribes For a Human Be-In” took place at the Polo Grounds in Golden Gate Park. Over 25,000 people eventually congregated

⁴ Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 159-160; “Tune In/Turn Out/Be-In,” *Berkeley Barb*, 13 January 1967; Steve Levine, “The First American Mehla” *San Francisco Oracle*, February 1967.

around the stage. The festivities on this bright and clear day commenced in the afternoon after Gary Snyder blew long and loud into a white conch shell, summoning the tribes. Other Beat poets—Michael McClure and Lawrence Ferlinghetti—sat next to him. Lenore Kandel read sexual poems from her *Love Book*, while Alan Ginsberg, dressed in white, sang mantras. Timothy Leary, wearing white pajamas, urged those who would listen to “turn on, tune in, and drop out” and the audience responded tepidly.⁵

The audience constituted the main attraction at the Be-In. Around the stage, people did their thing. *Newsweek* described the scene as “gentle anarchy.” Revelers wore animal robes, feathers, tusks, beads, and flowers, and held balloons, banners, fans, flags, and chimes. Women donned long skirts and colorful blouses. Longhairs played bongos, flutes, and tambourines and burned incense. Others sat in the grass, sharing food and wine. The Diggers distributed free turkey sandwiches and Owsley Stanley donated free LSD tablets—“White Lightning.” Many openly smoked marijuana and police on horseback did not make arrests. Hippies danced to Quicksilver Messenger Service, Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane, Sir Douglas Quintet, Big Brother and the Holding Company, and the Loading Zone, while the Hell’s Angels stood guard over the sound equipment. At one point, a parachutist made a dramatic entrance, landing on the field. As the sun started to dip below the horizon, Gary Snyder blew on the conch once again, and the crowd began to disperse. “The be-in was a blossom. It was a flower,”

⁵ Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 160-161; Ed Denson, “What Happened at the Hippening,” *Berkeley Barb*, 20 January 1967; Robert Hurwitz, “A Gathering of the Tribes For a Human Be-In,” *Underground* (Washington, D.C.), 25 January 1967.

recalled playwright Michael McClure. “It was perfect in its imperfections. It was what it was—and there had never been anything like it before.”⁶

The Be-In, though quite successful overall, failed to achieve one of its main objectives: uniting politicians and hippies. The gathering of the tribes had actually revealed significant divisions between the factions. When it came time for Jerry Rubin to speak, he made the only political speech, an appeal for bail money for jailed activists. He ranted angrily about the war in Vietnam, which seemed out of place at the peaceful gathering. The crowd mostly ignored him and some made sarcastic remarks. Tensions between activists and psychedelists became heightened a few days after the Be-In when the *Oracle* staff held a hip conference. Timothy Leary attended and he advanced a perspective held by most of the growing legions of dropouts. “Don’t vote. Don’t politic. Don’t petition,” Leary said. “You can’t do anything about America politically.” For Leary and for many counterculturalists, politics brought people down and were a bummer; power-hungry individuals dominated all political systems and all political systems were similar and equally oppressive. Outraged at Leary’s comments, the editors of the *Berkeley Barb* urged anti-war activists to protest his presence when he returned to the Bay area to speak.⁷

The Human Be-In was only the opening salvo in what was to be the year of the be-in and love-in: 1967. The hippies participated in them for several reasons. First, the

⁶ “Dropouts With a Mission,” *Newsweek*, 6 February 1967, 92; Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 162; Perry, *Haight-Ashbury*, 120-123; Levine, “The First American Mehla;” Hurwitt, “A Gathering of the Tribes;” Anthony, *Summer of Love*, 7.

⁷ Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 164-167; Denson, “What Happened at the Hippening;” Hurwitt, “A Gathering of the Tribes;” Leary in John Bryan, *What Ever Happened to Timothy Leary?* (San Francisco, 1980), 96; Gitlin, *The Sixties*, 208.

be-ins presented an opportunity for hippies to indulge in two of their foremost values: community and love. Second, they allowed counterculturalists to escape the Establishment and the troubles of straight society for a few hours. Hippies at the Chicago Be-In, for example, “relaxed, forgot the cold, the police, the hate, war, and all the petty flaws that keep men’s scattered souls from uniting in love.” Finally, such gatherings represented the essence of the countercultural project; hippies created—albeit for a short period—ideal, instant communities, which allowed them to engage in their unique values together without obstruction.⁸

Newsweek and the *New York Times* publicized the Human Be-In in February and alienated hippies far and wide became aware of San Francisco’s “love feast” and “psychedelic picnic.” That spring, be-ins materialized in every region of the country.⁹

Inspired by the Human Be-In, hippies in New York City put together their own. On Easter Sunday, 10,000 people crowded into Sheep Meadow in Central Park from dawn to dusk. The *New York Times* called the event “noisy, swarming, chaotic, and utterly surrealistic,” noting the clothing and accessories of the young who painted their faces and who wore bedsheets, tights, flower petals, paper stars, and tiny mirrors. “Love” was an omnipotent sentiment: girls painted it on their on their foreheads, kids surrounded police chanting it, while others jumped up and down, shouting it. The participants shared feelings of openness, tenderness, and trust. Hippies clad in robes

⁸ “Human Be-In: Tribes Assemble on North Beach Avenue,” *The Seed* (Chicago), May-June 1967.

⁹ “Dropouts With a Mission,” 92.

strummed guitars and banjos and blew bubbles and, as a gesture of goodwill, they offered a police officer jellybeans.¹⁰

At the same time, at least 4,000—perhaps as many as 20,000—hippies grooved at the Easter Sunday Love-In at Elysian Park in Los Angeles. The earliest attendees arrived at daybreak, watching the sun come up. A youth sat atop the stage reading aloud an Indian prayer entitled “Seeking the Return of the Great Spirit.” Strangers handed each other lilies and balloons, and hippies wearing shawls and robes sat in tents or on blankets listening to rock bands the Turtles, the New Generation, the Rainy Daze, and the Peanut Butter Conspiracy.¹¹

The prospect of huge numbers of youth dropping out of the mainstream—and out of politics—raised concerns on the political Left. While hippies smoked grass, sailed on acid, and preached love and peace, Americans and Vietnamese continued to die. Activists disdained apolitical and anti-political individuals while so many lives hung in the balance. From their perspective, hippies had misplaced priorities; the war needed to be stopped and dropouts did nothing. Activists targeted the hippie value love for attack. “Love Generation,” a woman wrote to an underground, “Turn off for a while and show some love for the women and children being napalmed by the hate people.” “Love is great, I love it—but it’s not enough,” remarked another. *Ramparts* published a story on the hippies, identifying the potential threat they posed to activism. “The danger in the hippie movement is more than over-crowded streets and possible hunger riots this

¹⁰ Bernard Weinraub, “10,000 Chant ‘L-O-V-E,’” *New York Times*, 27 March 1967, p. 1; Jezer, *Abbie Hoffman*, 81-82.

¹¹ Dave Larsen, “Hippies Fill Glen With Splendors of Love and Miniskirts,” *Los Angeles Times*, 27 March 1967, p. 3; “It’s Love, Love, Love!,” *Ebony*, July 1967, 100.

summer,” wrote Warren Hinckle. “If more and more youngsters begin to share the hippie political posture of unrelenting quietism, the future of activist, serious politics is bound to be affected.”¹²

But activists did not give up on dropouts because they saw in them substantial untapped manpower. Peace, love, flower power, rock music, and be-ins could be steered to political purposes. Protest organizations made strong efforts at luring hippies to their cause, utilizing counterculture trademarks. Student activist organizations scheduled rock concerts and light shows to raise funds for the anti-war movement. The Washington Spring Mobilization for Peace Committee enticed dropouts to participate in a demonstration by organizing a “happening,” complete with Guerilla Theater. “We want the Mobilization to serve as a focal point for fresh avenues of expression of opposition to the war,” remarked a female coordinator. “Diverse approaches have to be tried to get people on the Peace Train to New York.”¹³

As a result of activist efforts, some counterculturalists began joining anti-war protests. The Spring Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, a loose confederation of pacifists, radicals, and liberals seeking to unify the anti-war movement, sponsored major protests. On April 15, some 50,000 people demonstrated in San Francisco, while 200,000 marched with Martin Luther King, Jr. and other notable figures in New York City. In San Francisco, hundreds of marchers wore costumes and carried flowers. Although some people were skeptical about mixing be-ins with politics, several

¹² “Letters,” *East Village Other* (New York), 1-15 July 1967; “Love is Great, I Love It,” *Berkeley Barb*, 20 January 1967; Warren Hinckle, “A Social History of the Hippies,” in *The American Experience: A Radical Reader*, ed. Harold Jaffe and John Tytell (New York, 1970), 284.

¹³ “Antiwar Rock Dance Saturday,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 29 September – 5 October 1967; Sheila Ryan, “Out of the Ashes, a Phoenix,” *Washington Free Press*, 2 April 1967.

thousand young men and women gathered for a be-in at Central Park organized by activists. Hippies with painted faces and legs danced to guitars, flutes, and drums in Sheep Meadow before the demonstration commenced. During a draft card burning, some of the demonstrators wore or carried daffodils, while others chanted “Flower Power.”¹⁴

Meanwhile, love-ins continued to sprout. On Saturday, April 22, at least 7,000 counterculturalists showed up for a be-in at Franklin Park Zoo in Boston. Women wore floppy hats and “mod” women strolled the grounds in mini-skirts. Hippies handed out flowers and burned incense, while balloons marked with the words “Love Everybody” floated around. ¹⁵

Love-ins soon spread to the Midwest and South. More traditional and conservative than the coasts, hip celebrations in these regions tended to considerably smaller with fewer participants. Hippies clustered around urban centers and near universities, places more eclectic, cosmopolitan, and socially and politically liberal than the surrounding countryside.

On Sunday, April 23, Texas hippies loved-in at Houston’s Hermann Park. The crowd grew to nearly 1,500 at its peak. Young people sported flowers and dances to the sounds of jug bands. A man wearing a black cape and gasmask suggested that the

¹⁴ Helen Swick Perry, *The Human Be-In* (New York, 1970), 90; Douglas Robinson, “100,000 Rally at U. N. Against Vietnam War,” *New York Times*, 16 April 1967, p. 1-2; McNeill, *Moving Through Here*, 11.

¹⁵ Robert J. Anglin, “Seven Thousand Attend Blissful ‘Be-in’ at Franklin Park Zoo,” *Boston Globe*, 23 April 1967, p. 1, 14.

participants march to the zoo, which they did. The *Rag* called the love-in “spontaneous and happy.”¹⁶

The next Sunday, over 4,000 gathered at Detroit’s Bell Isle Park for six or seven hours of dancing, singing, sharing, and picnicking. Strangers fed each other, passing around eggs, oranges, and tomatoes. Flower children smiled at each other, called each other beautiful, and presented each other with gifts. A woman passed out cards with the word love written on it. In what proved to be the “great banana hoax of 1967,” heads passed around “banana joints,” believing, incorrectly, that the inside lining of banana-peels had psychoactive potential. As a band jammed, hippies danced or rolled around in the grass together.¹⁷

On the same day in Seattle, the Underground paper *Helix* promoted “The Chief Seattle Flower Potlatch Power & Isness-in,” which took place at Volunteer Park. The crowd of 4,000 was mostly made-up of hippies, but others attended as well. A marine from Fort Lewis, for instance, wore a painted flower on top of his head and a silver-haired woman wearing an orchid on her poncho exclaimed, “I haven’t had so much fun in YEARS.” The young danced, flailing wildly to the sounds of several local bands—Clockwork Orange, Crome Syrcus, and Magic Fern. They also picnicked, blew soap bubbles, flew kites, played conga drums, and wooden flutes.¹⁸

¹⁶ “Houston Love-In,” *The Rag* (Austin), 8 May 1967.

¹⁷ Shell Salasnek, “Love-In,” *Fifth Estate* (Detroit), 15-31 May 1967; on banana-peel smoking hoax see John McMillian, *Smoking Typewriters: The Sixties Underground Press and the Rise of Alternative Media in America* (New York, 2011), 66-81.

¹⁸ Walt Crowley, *Rites of Passage: A Memoir of the Sixties in Seattle* (Seattle, 1995), 60, 74; See Free Online Encyclopedia of Washington State History article by Alan J. Stein, http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=8189.

On Mother's Day, hippies assembled on North Avenue Beach for Chicago's Human Be-In. The Be-In, the *Chicago Seed* proudly proclaimed, was "the Midwest's confirmation that She, too, belonged within the folds of Love that have gathered the tribes together everywhere across the continent." Despite the cold and wind, nearly 5,000 joined in the fun. Hippies held balloons, flew kites, wore and passed out flowers, and openly expressed their love for one another along the beach. Some built small fires to keep warm.¹⁹

Philadelphia's "Happy Un-Birthday Be-In" also unfolded on Mother's Day when approximately 2,500 hippies met in front of Independence Hall. The organizers passed out 500 joints made from a half-pound of marijuana. A hippie family distributed balloons, while others gave away candy, magazines, and incense.²⁰

Underground newspapers multiplied as quickly as be-ins. In 1967, many inaugural issues rolled off the press—*Helix* in Seattle, the *Seed* in Chicago, *Open City* in Los Angeles, and *Avatar* in Boston. Marshall Bloom and Raymond Mungo established another hip press service in the fall, the *Liberation News Service* (LNS). By the end of the year, John Kois had started the *Milwaukee Kaleidoscope* and Don De Maio had produced Philadelphia's *Distant Drummer*. In 1968, other major undergrounds appeared—New York's *Rat*, John Wilcock's *Other Scenes*, Boston's *Old Mole*, and the anti-war, anti-racist *Great Speckled Bird* in Atlanta, one of the first papers to emerge in the South. By the close of the sixties, nearly every city with over 100,000 residents had

¹⁹ "Human Be-In," *The Seed* (Chicago).

²⁰ "30 Seized in Philadelphia As 2,500 Stage a 'Be-In,'" *New York Times*, 15 May 1967, p. 14; "Letters," *East Village Other* (New York), 1-15 July 1967.

an underground paper, as did 50 college towns. Eventually there would be three wire services, 500 undergrounds, and more than 500 dissenting high school papers, with a total circulation of about five million.²¹

The underground press proliferated and the counterculture expanded at an unprecedented pace for one central reason: alienation was on the rise. The seeds of youthful unrest were planted in the late forties, the fifties, and early sixties, bearing fruit in 1965 when the counterculture flowered. Alienation had increased with such perceived outrages as the onset of the immoral and unnecessary Vietnam War, an ominous draft, campus paternalism, and police harassment. And alienation continued to grow as the disillusioned pointed out the hypocrisies and injustices perpetrated by the Establishment and the mainstream.

Government leaders and policymakers caused immense discontent. The older generation had started a war and expected young men to serve in the armed forces. Those opposed to the war might be coerced to fight and die, while the people responsible for the conflict did not make any sacrifices, and many found this situation unjust. “Obscene and senile people . . . sit on draft boards and slaver at the sight of all the young ass that’s eligible for being stuffed into uniform and sent away to fight obscene and evil wars for the obscene and evil old ones . . . why the hell don’t YOU go out and fight?” asked the *Los Angeles Free Press*.²²

Moreover, democracy did not seem to exist. The young wondered: “who

²¹ Peck, *Uncovering the Sixties*, xv, 43-133; Robert J. Glessing, *The Underground Press in America* (Bloomington, 1970), 11-79; Unger, *The Sixties*, 157; Anderson, *Movement and the Sixties*, 245.

²² Alex Apostolides, “It’s Tough When You Don’t Want To Kill People,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 29 September – 5 October 1967.

represents us in Washington?” Both major political parties had made the commitment to fight a global Cold War and Communism in Vietnam and both parties represented special interests, especially the defense industry. Those who yearned for peace had no viable political options. Men could be drafted and sent to war at age eighteen, yet they could not make an impact on government policy as the voting age was twenty-one. “This country is supposed to be a democracy—but there is no real control over one’s own life,” lamented a youth from upstate New York. A Californian expressed a similar sentiment, writing, “No matter who wins, the wars will continue, and the conditions surrounding the lives of most American will not change.”²³

Furthermore, hypocrisy and an intolerant majority caused disillusionment. Traditionalists and conservatives charged peace advocates with treason and Communist subversion. Many adults championed the First Amendment, but supported censorship of materials they deemed obscene. Others revered the American revolutionaries of 1776, while staunchly opposing “unpatriotic” and “un-American” student revolts against authority on campuses. But no issue infuriated kids more than the hypocrisies related to drugs. Adults smoked cigarettes, got loaded on alcohol, and abused prescription drugs—tranquilizers, barbiturates, and amphetamines—drugs more powerful and dangerous than marijuana. By the mid sixties, about 3,000 people died of prescription drug overdoses each year. Yet these drug-addicted and dependent adults condemned drug use by youth.²⁴

²³ “To the Students,” *The Buffalo Insider* (Buffalo, NY), 25 September 1967; Farrel Broslawsky, “‘Legitimate’ Protest Sustains Institutions,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 10-17 November 1967.

²⁴ “Letters,” *East Village Other* (New York), 1-15 May 1967; “Letters,” *Extra!* (Providence), 27 May – 1 July 1969; Farber, *Age of Great Dreams*, 173-174.

The young found ironies in relation to Jesus and Christianity especially disturbing. The majority claimed to be Christians, but supported wars and killing, while standing opposed to people who followed the actual teachings of Christ, a “radical sort of character who told people to love one another and live together in peace.” If Jesus came back to earth, the young argued, he would be “WANTED” by law enforcement for practicing medicine without a license, “loitering” around synagogues, and wearing “typical hippie attire—long hair, robes, and sandals.” Furthermore, Christ would likely have been an anti-war demonstrator, the kind of individual professed Christians condemned as irresponsible, unpatriotic, and bad for the country.²⁵

The majority’s definition of what constituted “obscenity” also confounded the young. Youth vehemently contested the Establishment’s idea of what qualified as obscene. The government and “Silent Majority” seemed to accept, condone, and perpetrate hate, killing, and war—the epitome of obscene—while censoring sex—a natural, healthy, and beautiful act. A Nebraska underground articulated this frustration well:

Is it obscene to fuck,
or
Is it obscene to kill?

Is it more obscene to describe
fucking,
An act of love,
or,
Is it more obscene to describe
killing,
An act of hate?

²⁵ Jolm Raymond, “Yes, Virginia, There’s a \$anta,” *Berkeley Citizen*, 23 December 1966; “Joe Pyne Interviews Jesus Christ,” *F.T.E!* (Los Angeles), March 1967.

Which is really obscene?²⁶

Alienated hippies appeared everywhere as be-ins proliferated throughout the spring and Summer of Love. Los Angeles hippies held a series of gatherings in Griffith and Elysian Parks in which tens of thousands participated. A couple of be-ins complete with “bright smiles,” “bells” and “strange thoughts” occurred in Cleveland near the lagoon in front of the art museum and two love-ins “sputtered along” in Milwaukee’s Lake Park. In the nation’s capitol, 1,200 came together for a be-in at Rock Creek Park, while Oklahoma flower children held a love-in in Tulsa. Freaks who had access to the ocean hit the sandy shores. Florida experienced its first love-in when 1,500 hippies and motorcyclists descended on tiny Lantana Beach. An estimated 10,000 sang, danced, and made music on Seal Beach in California in late June and in early July, 3,000 hippies congregated in Audubon Park in New Orleans. Flower people in Spokane, Washington came together for at least three be-ins at Cliff Park.²⁷

Yet no single hip enclave or scene was larger, more vibrant, or more celebrated than Haight-Ashbury in San Francisco. Over 25 new businesses had opened in the district the year before. That spring, runaways, poets, and artists had already packed the Haight. There were hip Christian missionaries out to make converts, beggars, Hindu

²⁶ John Sieler, “What is Obscene?” *Asterisk* (Omaha), 8 January 1969.

²⁷ McBride, “Counterculture,” in *A Companion To Los Angeles*, ed. Deverell and Hise, 330; “Editorial: Pray for Cleveland,” *The Buddhist Third Class Junkmail Oracle* (Cleveland), Vol. 1, no. 5 (1967); Don Peterson, “Smile at Narcs?” *Kaleidoscope* (Milwaukee), 6-19 October 1967; “Heads Busted on 25st,” *Washington Free Press*, 5-11 May 1967; Jack Newfield, “One Cheer For the Hippies,” *The Nation*, 26 June 1967, 809; “1,500 In Florida Hold the State’s First Love-In,” *Baltimore Sun*, 12 June 1967, p. A4; “Hippie Love-in Draws 10,000 in Seal Beach,” *Los Angeles Times*, 26 June 1967, p. OC8; “New Orleans Has Love-in,” *Boston Globe*, 10 July 1967, p. 16; “Be-In Bugged By Brusque Burlesque,” *Spokane Natural*, Vol. 1, No. 11 (1967).

hippies, and people who claimed to be from UFOs. People smiled everywhere. A mailman went by the name Admiral Love, while the hippies knew the local policeman as Sergeant Sunshine.²⁸

Haight hippies established counter-institutions. Lawyers founded Haight-Ashbury Legal Organization (HALO), and The Switchboard helped dropouts find crashpads and temporary employment, while assisting concerned parents of runaways. Doctor David Smith opened the 24-hour Free Medical Clinic. Part-time doctors and volunteers staffed it, treating ailments such as venereal disease, foot sores, and adverse drug reactions.²⁹

The national news media became obsessed with the district. Nearly every major television network and publication showcased the psychedelic community. For a time it seemed like the entire country was fixated on the hippies, mesmerized by their alterative lifestyles. Descriptors such as “flower children” and “love generation” entered the mainstream lexicon. Reporters from all over the world descended on the Hashbury and hippies joked about bead-wearing *Life* and *Look* journalists interviewing each other.³⁰

“If you’re going to San Francisco,” sang Scott McKenzie in a hit song, “be sure to wear some flowers in your hair.” And they came. When summer began, hordes of middle-class youth from all over the country enthralled by incessant national news stories poured into the Haight every day; eventually, 75,000 would arrive during the Summer of Love. The problem of runaway teens reached epidemic proportions. The

²⁸ Miles, *Hippie*, 195; Peck, *Uncovering the Sixties*, 45.

²⁹ Miles, *Hippie*, 200, 204.

³⁰ Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 163; Peck, *Uncovering the Sixties*, 45.

Juvenile Justice Commission apprehended and returned to their parents 200 runaways each month. Tourists inundated the area, too. Carloads of wide-eyed gawkers, bumper-to-bumper, came down Haight Street. So did Gray Line Bus Company taking its passengers on a “Hippie Hop”—“the only foreign tour within the continental limits of the United States.” Businesses immediately began transforming the counterculture into a commodity, selling Day-Glo posters, “lovedogs,” and “hippieburgers.” Tourists bought “Love Guides” to the Hashbury at the Print Mint.³¹

As the flower people flowed into the Hashbury, racial tensions emerged. White middle and upper-class individuals primarily constituted the counterculture. Approximately one quarter, however, belonged to the working class—a fact overlooked by most historians. Many of the hippie runaways in America’s cities came from blue-collar and even poor families. Few hippies of color moved among their white counterparts, a great irony given that the African-American hipster of the early Twentieth Century tremendously influenced the counterculture’s style, language, and oppositional nature. And African-American musicians were mostly responsible for developing the hippies’ beloved rock and roll.³²

In the Hashbury and elsewhere, longhairs referred to blacks as “spades.” African-Americans held hippies in contempt because hippies had abandoned the comfortable middle-class life that they struggled to attain. Moreover, blacks resented that the flower children could escape their self-imposed poverty at any time, while they

³¹ Miles, 200, 206; Horace Sutton, “Hip Ideas on How to Visit Hippieland in the Bay Area,” *Los Angeles Times*, 2 July 1967, p. G7; Lee and Shlain, 176; Jeff Jassen, “What Price Love?” *Berkeley Barb*, 5-11 May 1967.

³² Yablonsky, *Hippie Trip*, 26; Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s*, 2nd ed (New York, 2004), 209.

could not. They resented the hippies' claims of being an oppressed minority even more. For their part, hippies had difficulty understanding black aspirations. "The negroes are fighting to become what we've rejected," commented a white Haight resident, "We don't see any sense in that." Culture clash also exacerbated the friction. Many "freaked-out WASPs" had never had any contact with minorities before arriving at the Haight.³³

Confrontations occurred elsewhere. In New York, on the Lower East Side, hippies clashed with blacks and Puerto Ricans at Tompkins Square Park. White European ethnics—Poles, Czechs, and Ukrainians—also disliked the hippies' noise, disorder, and anti-authoritarianism.³⁴

Most historians have overlooked—or are completely unaware of—the fact that some counterculturalists actively reached out to minorities. This happened most frequently in urban centers. Hippies abhorred racism; white radicals of the 1960s were the least racist white people in America. It must be remembered that although they did not participate formally in the movement, freaks sympathized with and backed the civil rights struggle. White hippies also openly welcomed minority hippies into their worlds. In San Francisco, Chester Anderson, writing for the *Communications Company*, lamented, "HAIGHT/ASHBURY IS THE FIRST SEGREGATED BOHEMIA I'VE EVER SEEN!" He recognized similarities between the hippie and black communities. Anderson reminded white and black hip alike that they fought for the same ideal:

³³ Jerry Rosenfield, "To No More Call A Man A Spade," *Berkeley Barb*, 10 March 1967; Chester Anderson, "Two Page Racial Rap," *Communications Company* (San Francisco), 9 February 1967 and "Freedom Now," *Communications Company*, no date, Box 1, Folder 6, Hippies Collection, San Francisco Public Library, San Francisco; Martin Arnold, "Organized Hippies Emerge On Coast," *New York Times*, 5 May 1967, p. 40.

³⁴ Paul Hofmann, "Hippies Heighten East Side Tensions," *New York Times*, 3 June 1967, p. 16.

freedom. He also urged hippies to unite with African-Americans against their common enemy: “The Man.” Moreover, Anderson encouraged white hippies to visit the black Fillmore district, to share their lives with the people there.³⁵

In Los Angeles, hippies organized be-ins for the explicit purpose of bringing whites and minorities together. In July, in Watts, hippies staged a love-in that drew 7,000 people. Taj Mahal and the Chambers Brothers provided musical entertainment and the organizers declared the event a success.³⁶

Some efforts, however, brought disastrous results. On August 30, hip groups Green Power and Vito’s Fraternity of Man sponsored a be-in in the East Los Angeles Aliso Village Projects where African and Mexican-American families lived in poverty. A rock band provided entertainment. Green Power distributed stale food, displeasing the poor, and later there was a confrontation between black adults and a white hippie woman after she chased a black child. “Hippies have quite a bit to learn about people in general and this is especially true if they are poor and not white Anglo-Saxons,” reported *Open City*.³⁷

Counterculturalists came to the aid of black ghetto residents in Newark following the July 1967 riots. A dozen people, including Abbie Hoffman, staged a be-in for the community. Dressed in “jump suits, miniskirts, safari hats, buttons, and painted faces,” the New York Diggers gave black children piggy-back rides and handed out flowers, candy, baby food, canned goods, bread, and meat. An African-American

³⁵ McBride, “Counterculture,” in Deverell and Hise, eds., *A Companion to Los Angeles*, 332; Chester Anderson, “Two Page Racial Rap” and “Freedom Now.”

³⁶ McBride, “Counterculture,” in Deverell and Hise, eds., *A Companion to Los Angeles*, 331.

³⁷ Jim Solono, “Love-In That Made Mostly Enemies,” *Open City* (Los Angeles), 7-13 September 1967.

woman understandably sensed that her well-meaning visitors might not be formidable allies, remarking, “I don’t know if it’s going to do us any good to have people like you on our side.”³⁸

In addition to reaching out to African-Americans, longhairs made efforts to ameliorate tensions between themselves and Puerto Ricans. Dope went a long way toward achieving this goal. “The hippies and the Puerto Ricans have one thing in common—grass,” remarked a smoke-in participant. “From that, a great relationship is being built up.” In August, the New York Diggers arranged a conga-rock and roll party for 900 Lower East Side hippies and Puerto Ricans at the Cheetah discotheque-night club. Free tickets had been distributed at the Diggers’ Free Store in the East Village. The party brought together two communities that had been recently warring at Tompkins Square Park. In spite of the efforts of the Diggers and others in the Haight, Los Angeles, and elsewhere, relations between minorities and the hippies would never be very amiable.³⁹

The counterculture also interacted with the Black Power movement. Black Power’s beginnings dated back to the mid sixties, when SNCC began to turn away from the principles of integration and interracialism. SNCC unveiled its new militant stance during the “March Against Fear” in the spring of 1966 when Stokeley Carmichael stood before a rally and proclaimed, “What we are gonna start saying now is Black Power.”

³⁸ “Hippies Stage a Be-In In Newark Negro Area,” *New York Times*, 23 July 1967, p. 18; Jezer, *Abbie Hoffman*, 92.

³⁹ Stephen A. O. Golden, “Police Look On as Hippies Stage a Park Smoke-In,” *New York Times*, 31 July 1967, p. 23; “Hippies ‘Integrate’ With Puerto Ricans,” *New York Times*, 16 August 1967, p. 36.

For the rest of the march, SNCC activists periodically asked crowds of black supporters, “What do we want?” and they responded enthusiastically with shouts of “Black Power!”

Black Power did not necessarily entail the revolutionary transformation of American society. For some, it simply meant “black pride”—a reverence for a distinct African-American heritage and culture. Many viewed this pride in racial identity as similar to the ethnic cohesion that had helped earlier groups such as the Jews and Irish attain upward mobility. Pan-Africanism also became a central part of Black Power. American blacks embraced African culture, donning African clothing like dashikis and playing or listening to traditional African music. The bonds went beyond culture, however; the Pan-African element of Black Power linked black African freedom with black American freedom. Black Power encompassed additional meanings as well. Stokeley Carmichael and others rejected the concept of non-violence; if violent whites attacked blacks who refused assimilation, blacks would return violence. Above all, Black Power involved self-empowerment.

Black Panther Party for Self-Defense was perhaps the most visible and controversial manifestation of Black Power. Students at Oakland City College, Bobby Seale and Huey Newton, founded the Panthers in October 1966. A community action group rather than a political party, the Panthers, in their manifesto, “What We Want, What We Believe,” made several demands of white America—freedom, full employment, decent housing, the release of black prisoners, and “an immediate end to POLICE BRUTALITY and MURDER of black people.” The Panthers did more than talk, providing services for the black community—food, shelters, education, and

alternate housing. The Panthers promoted self-defense and advised black people to arm themselves for protection. Wearing berets and military-style clothing, the Panthers formed self-defense groups and openly carried loaded weapons, which was legal.⁴⁰

Initially, the Panthers viewed the hippies as allies. In his book *Soul on Ice*, released in 1968, minister of information Eldridge Cleaver wrote, “The characteristics of the white rebels which most alarm their elders—the long hair, the new dances, their love for Negro music, their use of marijuana, their mystical attitude toward sex—are all tools of their rebellion. They have turned these tools against the totalitarian fabric of American society—and they mean to change it.” Cleaver took an interest in hip white culture and radicalism, making him a rarity among the Panther leadership.⁴¹

The San Francisco Diggers also formed an alliance with the Panthers. The Diggers believed that African-American men possessed a more authentic, “primitive” manhood, which sustained them in the face of white supremacy and oppression. The Diggers also valorized black masculinity and virility, while repudiating their own white identity, heeding poet Gary Snyder’s exhortation to “kill the white man” within. Emmett Grogan delivered free food to the Panther headquarters and the Diggers printed the first issue of the Party’s newspaper. The Diggers also held a fundraising benefit for boxer Muhammad Ali when he fought his induction into the military, supported the Black Man’s Free Store opened by Panther Roy Ballard, and worked closely with the Party in trying to ease racial tensions in the Haight-Ashbury. Black street toughs had been robbing white hippies. The Panthers published a notice in the party’s paper ordering

⁴⁰ Greene, *America in the Sixties*, 90-92.

⁴¹ Eldridge Cleaver, *Soul on Ice* (New York, 1968), 75; Jezer, *Abbie Hoffman*, 177.

“Black brothers” to “stop vamping on the hippies. They are not your enemy Your blind reactionary acts endanger the BLACK PANTHER PARTY LEAVE THEM ALONE. Or—THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY will deal with you!”⁴²

Yet, despite of all the talk of a general radical youth culture that included African-American militants, Black Power never made up part of the counterculture. Black radicals rarely came into contact with counterculturalists. While opposed to the Establishment, African-American militants strived to attain the middle-class comforts hippies had abandoned. Furthermore, black nationalists advocated racial pride and separatism, which isolated them from the counterculture. Black radicals shared far more commonalities with the New Left than with the hippies as New Leftists stood against imperialism and viewed poor blacks as potential revolutionary proletarians.⁴³

Tensions between the counterculture and New Left also mounted in June 1967 when the San Francisco Diggers crashed an SDS organized “Back to the Drawing Boards” conference in Denton, Michigan. As Tom Hayden delivered a keynote speech, Peter Berg and Emmett Grogan bust into the dining hall. They announced that they were the Diggers and represented the kids of Haight-Ashbury. Confused and astonished SDSers sat transfixed as Peter Berg tore the New Left apart, asserting that it did not know what was happening, that it was ineffectual, and irrelevant. The only worthwhile activity, he contended, was to drop out and build one’s own civilization. “Don’t let them make a machine out of you, get out of the system, do your thing,” Berg prodded. “Don’t

⁴² Hodgdon, *Manhood in the Age of Aquarius*, 44-46; “Warning to So-Called ‘Paper Panthers,’” *Black Panther* (Oakland), 14 September 1968.

⁴³ Lytle, *America’s Uncivil Wars*, 199.

organize students, teachers, Negroes, organize your head. Find out where you are, what you want to do and go out and do it. The Kremlin is more fucked up than Alabama.” Emmett Grogan jumped up on table, jumped back down, kicked the table over, and slapped several conference participants. “Faggots! Fags!” he shouted, “Take off your ties, they are chains around your necks. You haven’t got the balls to go mad. You’re gonna make a revolution?—you’ll piss in your pants when the violence erupts.”⁴⁴

For SDS member Todd Gitlin, the Diggers episode “prefigured a larger chasm between political and cultural radicals.” He also asserted that the disruption permanently derailed the conference. Moreover, Gitlin maintained that following the meeting, SDS failed to “outgrow the student movement.” The Diggers, however, had the opposite effect on Abbie Hoffman who found them fascinating. After the Diggers departed the conference, Hoffman stayed, telling others that “SDS’s future was with hippies, not with students.”⁴⁵

Despite the enmity and confrontations, hippies remained effervescent, for it was the Summer of Love, and the Beatles released one of the greatest rock albums: *Sergeant Pepper’s Lonely Heart’s Club Band*. The album effectively heralded the blossoming of the counterculture. After the Fab Four quit touring in 1966, they devoted themselves completely to creating a musical masterpiece in the studio. *Pepper* was to be a new kind of album, a work of art. “In 1967,” a Beatles scholar has written, “odd-chord progressions, elusive lyrics, unusual instruments and bizarre studio effects would lend to

⁴⁴ Gitlin, *The Sixties*, 227-229.

⁴⁵ Gitlin, *The Sixties*, 229; Jonah Raskin, *For the Hell of It: The Life and Times of Abbie Hoffman* (Berkeley, 1996), 104-105.

the Beatles' music a sense of magic and mystery that defied rational interpretation." By the time the Beatles recorded *Pepper*, all four members had taken LSD; acid heightened the creative abilities of the songwriters. Lennon and McCartney made greater demands of producer George Martin. For the song "Being for the Benefit of Mr. Kite," Martin incorporated swirling circus sounds and Victorian steam organs. For the cut "A Day in the Life," the album's finale, a 41 piece symphony orchestra produced a cacophony of noise after Lennon informed Martin he wanted "a sound building up from nothing to the end of the world." At the end of the album, the group added a note at 20,000-Hertz frequency, which could only be heard by dogs. Production costs soared. The band's first record had cost about \$2,000 and was recorded in a single day. *Pepper* cost \$100,000 and took four months to complete.⁴⁶

The record's motifs and lyrics were eminently countercultural. The Beatles made references to acid. "Lucy in the Sky With Diamonds," an mnemonic for LSD, evoked images of "marmalade skies," "newspaper taxis," "tangerine trees," "looking-glass ties," and a girl with "kaleidoscope eyes." Lennon also sang "I'd love to turn you on," and "he blew his mind out in a car," on the song "A Day in the Life." Other lyrics pertained to hippie values and recent developments within hippie culture. "She's Leaving Home" referenced a runaway girl who flees the safety and security of middle-class life because of "something inside that was always denied for so many years."

⁴⁶ Philip Norman, *Shout!: The Beatles in Their Generation* (New York, 1981), 288-291; Schaffner, *The Beatles Forever*, 74; Ward, Stokes, and Tucker, *Rock of Ages*, 369.

“With a Little Help From My Friends,” expressed communal values as one could “get by” and “get high” with the aid of his or her brothers and sisters.⁴⁷

The album’s release in June 1967 was a watershed moment in the lives of many people. Thousands to this day—especially former hippies—remember where they were and what they were doing the first time they listened to *Sergeant Pepper*. Critics showered the record with praise. Kenneth Tynan called it a “decisive moment in the history of Western Civilization.” Timothy Leary went the furthest in extolling the band. “The Beatles are Devine Messiahs,” he declared, “The wisest, holiest, most effective avatars (Divine Incarnate, God Agents) that the human race has yet produced.” Like Leary, many hippies took the album seriously, analyzing it with great intensity—like they would the *I Ching*, astrological charts, and Tarot cards—searching for prophesies, messages, and signs. During the Summer of Love, *Pepper* was ubiquitous, its songs floating out of open windows, passing cars, and transistor radios from Los Angeles to London to Paris to Rome.⁴⁸

An equally significant counterculture event occurred in mid June, the first major rock festival of the Sixties: the Monterey International Pop Festival. On the second day the crowd swelled to 50,000; others placed the number at 100,000. Some of the most popular and talented groups of the era performed there: Eric Burdon and the Animals, Simon and Garfunkel, Country Joe and the Fish, the Butterfield Blues Band, Moby Grape, Grateful Dead, Jefferson Airplane, Buffalo Springfield, Electric Flag, Quicksilver

⁴⁷ Norman, *Shout!*, 289, 293; Perry, *The Human Be-In*, 177.

⁴⁸ Norman, *Shout!*, 292-293; Leary in Schaffner, *The Beatles Forever*, 71; James Miller, *Flowers in the Dustbin: The Rise of Rock and Roll, 1947-1977* (New York, 1999), 259-260.

Messenger Service, Otis Redding, Ravi Shankar, Canned Heat, and the Mamas and the Papas. Some gave more memorable performances than others. Jimi Hendrix carried out a sacrificial ritual of his guitar, dousing it in lighter fluid, setting it aflame. At the conclusion of the Who's set, a smoke bomb exploded, Keith Moon kicked over his drums, and Pete Townshend rammed his guitar into an amplifier before demolishing the instrument in front of stunned and bewildered onlookers.⁴⁹

A countercultural atmosphere pervaded the festival. A spirit of brotherhood, sisterhood, and love was in the air. Although they did not agree with the admission prices, the Diggers came and served food to hungry kids. Booths decorated in strange designs and bright colors covered the festival grounds and flowers were everywhere. The police looked askance as musicians smoked marijuana backstage and concert-revelers smoked it openly. Free tabs of LSD—"Monterey Purple"—were given out. Hippies handed flowers to police, burned incense, gave the peace sign, and everyone seemed to be smiling.⁵⁰

While hippies felt that Monterey Pop was a resounding success, the Haight-Ashbury took a downward turn. The national mainstream media played a major role in bringing about the Haight's problems, for it began defining the hippie image, culture, and values, and as a result, the legions of individuals that flooded the Haight differed significantly from the district's original denizens. These individuals merely assumed the image the media created; they did not embrace or practice authentic hippie values. Suddenly, anyone could be hip. "Plastic hippies" and weekenders from the suburbs did

⁴⁹ Robert Santelli, *Aquarius Rising: The Rock Festival Years* (New York, 1980), 21-59.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

not seek to have spiritual awakenings or aspire to build a new and better world; they threw on some beads, smoked some dope, and rapped about “doing their own thing.” Many males came in the hopes of picking up a hippie “chick.” Alienated and aimless teens arrived with no plan, no place to live, no job, no food, and no means of supporting themselves. They quickly took to begging on the street and sleeping in doorways, while getting heavily loaded on drugs.⁵¹

The Haight declined rapidly. Delinquents, drug pushers, and criminals from the tenderloin migrated to the area. Amphetamines, STP, and heroin contended with pot and acid as the drugs of choice. Rapes and beatings increased and so did cases of sexually transmitted diseases. Homeless and hungry speed freaks went crazy and some became violent. Junkies lacked all moral restraints in their quest to acquire funds for their next fix. A *Communications Company* leaflet described the brutal reality of what the Haight had become by September:

Pretty little 16-year-old middle-class chick comes to the Haight to see what it's all about & gets picked up by a 17-year-old street dealer who spends all day shooting her full of speed again & again, then feeds her 3000 mikes & raffles off her temporarily unemployed body for the biggest Haight Street gang bang since the night before last Rape is as common as bullshit on Haight Street.

By the end of the year, 17 murders, 100 rapes, and nearly 3,000 burglaries had been reported. Lieutenant James Ludlow believed that the real rates were twice as high.⁵²

Veterans of the Haight—those who considered themselves authentic

⁵¹ “Death of Hippie – Birth of Free,” *The Seed* (Chicago), 14 October – 3 November 1967; Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 175-179.

⁵² Miles, *Hippie*, 195; “Uncle Tim’s Children,” *Communications Company* (San Francisco), 16 April 1967, Box 1, Folder 4, Chester Anderson Papers, BANC MSS 92/839 c, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley; John Luce, “Haight-Ashbury Today: A Case of Terminal Euphoria,” *Esquire*, July 1969, 68.

counterculturalists—decided to start anew and lay the media-manufactured “hippie” to rest forever. On Friday, October 6, the “Death of Hippie” and “Rebirth of Free Men” ceremony was held. All the local stores closed in observance of the pageant and the Psychedelic Shop closed its doors for good. The Free Medical Clinic had ceased operations three weeks earlier. A funeral procession carried hippiedom in a black coffin down the street. Approximately 80 “mourners” threw hair, wilted flowers, beads, sandals, and posters into the coffin and later, hippies exorcised and burned it in the Panhandle. “Hippies are dead: now the Free Men will come through!” they shouted.⁵³

Additional bad news came from New York that fall. Within days of the “Death of Hippie” parade, a handyman discovered the nude and bloody bodies of James “Groovy” Hutchinson and Linda Rae Fitzpatrick in a dirty boiler room in the East Village. Their heads had been bashed in with a blunt instrument and Fitzpatrick had been gang-raped. The two hippies had met a tragic end. Fitzpatrick was only eighteen and from a wealthy Connecticut family and Groovy was a friendly drifter from Central Falls, Rhode Island.⁵⁴

The national press declared the end of hippie. “Trouble in Hippieland,” proclaimed *Newsweek*, “Hippies—A Passing Fad?” wondered *U.S. News & World Report*, while the Associated Press trumpeted, the “Hippie Movement Has Lost ‘Spirit.’” *The New York Times Magazine* bluntly contended, “Love is Dead The hippie movement is over.” The average citizen reading mainstream publications was likely

⁵³ “Death of Hippie – Birth of Free;” “Hippie Movement Has Lost ‘Spirit,’” *Dallas Morning News*, 6 October 1967, p. 2; “Hippies: Where Have All the Flowers Gone?” *Time*, 13 October 1967, 30-31.

⁵⁴ Emanuel Perlmutter, “Girl, Youth Slain in ‘Village’ Cellar,” *New York Times*, 9 October 1967, p.1.

convinced that the counterculture had lasted only a few months. *Time* had introduced the hippies in July with a cover story; by October, the magazine asked, “Where Have All the Flowers Gone?”⁵⁵

Perhaps the evidence was compelling at the time, or maybe the mainstream wanted desperately to believe that hippiedom was declining precipitously. Whatever the case, the press was wrong. The great irony is that at the very moment the media proclaimed the counterculture was either dying or coming to its end, it was actually growing at an astronomical rate. The hippies, of course, knew that the media had it all wrong. “Well, it’s over,” joked *Open City*. “How do I know? The establishment newspaper is how. Would you believe I wasn’t even aware it was time to quit until I heard on the radio [that] everyone else was?”⁵⁶

Despite the Haight-Ashbury’s problems and the gruesome murders of Linda and Groovy, the counterculture thrived. Millions of counterculturalists built the new society outside of San Francisco, and the Haight itself survived into the early seventies. As for Linda and Groovy, their deaths shocked and dispirited the East Village community. Yet, the murder of two individuals, however tragic, did not represent the end of hippiedom, nor the end of the hippie project.

Los Angeles’s hip community flourished. By 1967, the scene had expanded from the Sunset Strip and Venice into Fairfax and the canyons, Malibu, Topanga, and Laurel. Communes thrived in the canyons, the most famous of which was Gridley

⁵⁵ “Trouble in Hippieland,” *Newsweek*, 30 October 1967, 84; “Hippies—A Passing Fad?” *U.S. News & World Report*, 23 October 1967, 42; “Hippie Movement Has Lost ‘Spirit,’” p. 2; “Hippies: Where Have All the Flowers Gone?” 30-31; Earl Shorris, “Love Is Dead,” *New York Times Magazine*, 29 October 1967, 27.

⁵⁶ Jack Jenkins, “A Positive Hip Philosophy,” *Open City* (Los Angeles), 5-11 January 1968.

Wright's Strawberry Fields/Desolation Row. Crashpads, too, abounded. Like San Francisco, L. A. became an immensely popular hippie dwelling place. In 1967, the police department estimated that 70,000 to 100,000 counterculturalists lived there. Thousands of dropouts came to Los Angeles during the Summer of Love and the local Diggers, despite financial difficulties, fed and housed them.⁵⁷

The East Village scene also remained lively, experiencing demonstrations, hippie gatherings, and street theater. An estimated 2,000 dropouts moved into the tenement buildings near Tompkins Square Park during the Summer of Love. The East Village acquired a music venue when Bill Graham opened up the Fillmore East in March 1968, which hosted such acts as the Who, Grateful Dead, and Santana. Hippies collected items for their pads at the Diggers' free furniture store. Like Haight-Ashbury, runaway teens flooded the East Village. The offices of the *East Village Other* served an information center, aiding runaways with food, transportation, and shelter. And like Haight-Ashbury, the Village scene deteriorated when runaways began begging and stealing and tourists and hip "weekenders" flooded the area.⁵⁸

In New England, the Boston-area proved a popular location for the hip. Hippies populated the local colleges—Brandeis, Boston University, Harvard, and M.I.T. In Boston and Cambridge, longhairs congregated around clothing, craft, "headshops," and eateries such as Hayes Bickford's and Ye Old Beef and Shakes.⁵⁹

Many hippies also resided in the Northwest. In Seattle, the Digger-like

⁵⁷ McBride, "Counterculture," in Deverell and Hise, eds., *A Companion to Los Angeles*, 330; Diggers in *Los Angeles Free Press*, 29 September – 5 October 1967.

⁵⁸ Mele, *Selling the Lower East Side*, 153-179.

⁵⁹ Robert Levey, "Hate for Conformity Unites Love Generation," *Boston Globe*, 10 December 1967, p. 1.

organization Basic Needs Company offered hip youth food at love-ins and sidewalk feed-ins. Seattle, like other cities, offered crashpads for nomadic youth. Portland, too, boasted a hip enclave; between 5,000 and 10,000 hippies traveled through there during the Summer of Love.⁶⁰

Earlier that autumn, the counterculture had penetrated the Rocky Mountains. On Sunday, September 24, “Denver’s First Human Be-In” got underway in City Park, west of the Natural History Museum. The crowd, clad in feathers, beads, and bells felt “Good vibes from beginning to end,” according to the underground *Solid Muldoon*. Youths carried signs, one of which read: “I AM A HIPPIE. I AM FOR LOVE. FOR LEGALIZED POT. AGAINST WAR OF ALL KINDS.” Freaks flooded Denver. The Denver Provos fed and housed runaways while assisting parents looking for their children. Dropouts could sleep at one of twenty crashpads. San Francisco’s Family Dog, under the direction of Chet Helms, opened a branch in Denver. The Dog featured a four-track recording studio and dance floor.⁶¹

As the counterculture became firmly ensconced in the nation’s cities and universities, some hippies engaged in cultural activism. Freaks typically resorted to cultural protest when authorities or laws obstructed, hindered, or violated the hip lifestyle or values. The most common cause for demonstrations related to dope. Angry hippies protested in New York in August 1967 against arrests for selling and possessing narcotics. After a cop busted three youths for selling dope, about 100 protested in front

⁶⁰ “A Free People,” *Helix* (Seattle), 16 August 1967; “Nirvana on the Willamette,” *Willamette Bridge* (Portland), 7-20 June 1968.

⁶¹ “Human Be-In,” *Solid Muldoon* (Denver), 27 September 1967; “He Falls Asleep,” *Solid Muldoon* (Denver), 10 November 1967 and “Interview: Communal Living,” *Solid Muldoon* (Denver), 1 December 1967; Perry, *Haight-Ashbury*, 227.

of the Manhattan Criminal Court building and a day later, some 500 longhairs dressed in sandals, colorful clothing, and beads staged a protest march from Tompkins Square Park to a Federal House of Detention following a Fugs concert.⁶²

Hippies staged “smoke-ins,” which served a dual purpose: first, they were demonstrations against what the hippies believed were unjust laws against marijuana; and second, smoke-ins allowed hippies to puff grass openly as police did not bother making arrests. In July, in New York, about 200 hippies and their Puerto Rican friends sat in Tompkins Square Park and smoked for over three hours. Seven policemen stood by and heads gave them an ovation. In the fall, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, between 800 and 1,000 hippies held a smoke-in for more than three hours on the Common. A smoke-in on the Boston Common was even larger, as 3,000 heads participated in that event surrounded by police and television cameras. Around the same time, at least 300 demonstrators lit up at San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park.⁶³

Others demonstrated against discrimination. After the manager of a Marc’s Big Boy hamburger restaurant in Milwaukee made it his intention to deny entry to anyone wearing beads, beards, sandals, or funny glasses, hippies formed picket lines outside the business.⁶⁴

While hippies engaged in cultural activism, anti-war activists organized some of the largest demonstrations in the nation’s history. In October, the newly created

⁶² “‘Pot’ Arrests Spark Protest by Hippies,” *Washington Post*, 22 August 1967, p. A12; “500 Hippies Stage a Protest March,” *New York Times*, 23 August 1967, p. 19.

⁶³ Golden, “Police Look On as Hippies Stage a Park Smoke-In,” p. 23; “Smoke-In Held at Cambridge,” *Boston Globe*, 9 October 1967, p. 4; “Heat Cool at Boston Pot-In,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 20-26 October 1967; “Saturday Smoke-In,” *Berkeley Barb*, 1-7 September 1967.

⁶⁴ Robert Rothman, “Bigot Boy vs. the Hippies,” *Kaleidoscope* (Milwaukee), 6-19 October 1967.

National Mobilization Committee Against the War—the MOBE—made up of students, civil rights workers, moderates, liberal intellectuals, and radicals, sponsored “Stop the Draft Week.” The anti-war movement became increasingly militant, moving “from protest to resistance.” In Oakland, 10,000 demonstrators battled police in the streets, and at the University of Wisconsin, students sat-in at a building to block Dow Chemical, a company that produced napalm, from recruiting on campus. Police with tear gas, nightsticks, Mace, and dogs broke up the protest in and outside the building.

David Dellinger, director of the MOBE, planned “Stop the Draft Week’s” culminating event, a March on the Pentagon in Washington. Moderates envisioned an orderly, peaceful protest, while radicals favored “freewheeling action that would raise the political stakes.” Dellinger imagined a demonstration that included non-violent resistance and direct confrontation; it would be both “Gandhi and Guerrilla.” To attract young activists and to add guerrilla flavor to the Pentagon protest, Dellinger asked Jerry Rubin to help organize it.⁶⁵

Rubin had been building his credibility among radicals and young people for the past two years. A leader of the Vietnam Day protest in Berkeley in 1965, he had also led demonstrators in an effort to stop trains loaded with troops. After HUAC subpoenaed him in Washington in 1966, Rubin mocked the proceedings, showing up in an American Revolutionary War uniform. He later ran for Berkeley Mayor and received 22 percent of the vote on a platform that opposed the war and called for legalizing marijuana.⁶⁶

Rubin then moved to New York City where he teamed up with Abbie Hoffman, a

⁶⁵ Raskin, *For the Hell of It*, 117.

⁶⁶ Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 202.

former civil rights organizer turned hippie. Hoffman slowly embraced the counterculture. As late as May 1967, he thought that the counterculture was nonsense and he chastised hippies for being apolitical and unreliable. Eventually he came around, dropping acid, smoking grass, and growing his hair long. Unlike most hippies, however, Hoffman never abandoned his commitment to activism and radical politics. Abbie liked being a hippie—the drugs, the sex, the hedonism—but beneath the veneer was an intellectual who read Marx, Mao, Lenin, and Marcuse. As scholar Jonah Raskin has argued, Hoffman’s becoming hip was part of a larger political plan. Hoffman integrated himself in the Lower East Side scene, claiming it as his own turf, while counting himself as one of the locals. Becoming a hippie “gave him an edge” in “the battle to convert hippies—the ‘glassy-eyed zombies,’ as he called them—to the cause of revolution.” Hoffman thought that the hippies could be made into almost anything he desired, so he acted as a “larger-than-life hippie role model” and began “organizing hippies.” Inspired by the San Francisco Diggers, he adopted their ideas and transformed himself into one. In the summer of 1967, Hoffman and his New York Diggers planted a tree in the middle of St. Mark’s Place, threw soot on Con Edison employees to protest air pollution, organized a smoke-in, and aided a black neighborhood following the Newark riots.⁶⁷

Hoffman and Rubin became quick friends. In August, Hoffman, Rubin, and James Fouratt proclaimed “the death of money,” showering one-dollar bills onto the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. Rubin claimed that Hoffman “revolutionized” him; Rubin grew his hair long, dropped acid regularly, shed his square clothing, donned

⁶⁷ Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 202-203; Raskin, *For the Hell Of It*, 90, 97-108; quote on p. 97; Organizing hippies comes from subtitle of chapter four in Jezer, *Abbie Hoffman*.

East Village hippie garb, and started cavorting with Abbie, Fouratt, Keith Lampe, and Ed Sanders. After going through these changes, he came to oppose the MOBE's formal tactics and advocated something newer. In late summer and early fall, Rubin and Hoffman began planning the Pentagon confrontation. They shared their thoughts about bringing hippies and activists together in a grand alliance, a coalition that promised to breathe new energy and enthusiasm into the movement. Hoffman and Rubin believed that dropouts could be an effective political force, if only theatrics, long hair, and costume were introduced into demonstrations to draw them in. Rubin came up with the idea of protesting at the Pentagon instead of the U. S. Capitol. At a press conference before the march, the two announced their intention to exorcise and levitate the Pentagon. Hoffman later declared in the *East Village Other* that love-making would occur on the grass near the building.⁶⁸

More and more hippies participated in anti-war activism and some joined in the March on the Pentagon, largely as the result of Hoffman's and Rubin's efforts to infuse protest with counterculture theatrics. Longhairs dressed as witches, warlocks, sorcerers, Indians, Sergeant Pepper's band, Martians, and Roman senators stood among the 100,000 assembled at the Lincoln Memorial. Demonstrators high on acid marched to the Pentagon. Flower people placed daisies in the rifle barrels of soldiers and chanted, "We love you!" and "Join us!" A few MPs did, throwing down their helmets and guns. Hoffman, Allen Ginsberg, and Ed Sanders of the Fugs, performed an exorcism on the Pentagon, shouting "Out, demon, out" while others played flutes, whistles, and bells, and

⁶⁸ John Kifner, "Hippies Shower \$1 Bills on Stock Exchange Floor," *New York Times*, 25 August 1967, p. 23; Raskin, *For the Hell of It*, 117-120; Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 203.

pounded bongos and beer cans. Later, the hippie contingent attempted to levitate the building. A communal atmosphere pervaded the grounds as demonstrators sang songs, picnicked, built campfires, and passed around joints and food.⁶⁹

As 1968 approached, the counterculture's numbers swelled and the hippie philosophy evolved. More people meant more perspectives and the counterculture's principles multiplied, and its outlook grew broader, more nuanced, and sophisticated. Hippies still held to the basic values they had established at mid decade, but now they exhibited and placed a greater emphasis on principles that had not been as prominent earlier.

As alienation soared, the war raged unabated, and the majority reacted with a repressive backlash, freaks put an even higher premium on dropping out. Dropping out entailed a nearly wholesale abandonment of the dominant culture and way of life, a spurning of mainstream institutions, traditions, religion, and concepts of work, success, and morality. Dropping out, of course, also included dropping into the Aquarian Age and embracing the countercultural lifestyle and values. And dropping out, the hippies stressed, was an individual's only avenue to total liberation. "Reject the whole system. All of it. The system is what's making you unfree. The system is what has you in chains. The system is what's killing you Be Free. Drop out. All the way," counseled the *Communications Company*. Similarly, a hip Midwesterner contended, "Turning on to acid-rock (with or without the aid of drugs) beats playing the money-

⁶⁹ Peck, *Uncovering the Sixties*, 74; Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 203-204; Jezer, *Abbie Hoffman*, 117-119; David Caute, *The Year of the Barricades: A Journey Through 1968* (New York, 1988), 5; Paul Cooper, "Washington," *Notes From the Underground* (Dallas), November 1967.

machine-don't fuck-don't laugh-don't think-don't feel game The game stinks. It steals my sex, my mind, my soul! Fuck it! I'd rather be free!" The counterculture also maintained that dropping out of the straight world facilitated personal enlightenment and the discovery of oneself.⁷⁰

Very few, however, dropped out completely. College hippies journeyed to hip communities during school breaks, yet many ultimately remained at university to earn degrees. Some hippies made livings ensconced in hip culture—dealing dope or as professional musicians—but few had the means to drop out totally. They worked part or full-time, followed the laws (though not all of them), paid bills, taxes, and rent. Some used social services.⁷¹

Another central value included the concept “doing your own thing.” The hippies believed that an individual should be free to do whatever they wanted and rejected most restraints: “If it feels good, do it provided it doesn't hurt you (physically) or someone else.” And because everyone did his or her thing, the counterculture remained a highly disorganized, individualistic enterprise. Most did not look to leaders for guidance or hold them in high regard. “Beware of leaders, heroes, organizers: watch that stuff. Beware of structure-freaks,” a San Francisco hipster warned. “Any man who *wants* to lead you is The Man Fuck leaders.” Others flatly denied that there were *any* leaders

⁷⁰ “Invitation to the Psychedelic Community,” *Communications Company*, 28 January 1967, Box 1, Folder 6, Hippies Collection, San Francisco Public Library; Brand, “And You Don't Know What it is, Do You, Mr. Jones?”

⁷¹ Edgar Friedenberg, ed., *The Anti-American Generation* (Chicago, 1971), 19-27; Miller, *Hippies and American Values*, 110; Anderson, *Movement and the Sixties*, 255.

at all. And because the “revolution” was about individuals going through personal transformations, some asserted that there was no real hippie “movement.”⁷²

Doing one’s own thing entailed an acceptance of oneself and it also led to self-discovery and searching for answers; hippies advocated seeking. “Do your own thing. Be what you are. If you don’t know what you are, find out,” counseled Chester Anderson, while a Denver seeker urged others to

Blast away the old thought patterns, tear down walls, kick open doors, and open you ever-loving eyes . . . FREAK OUT! It’s the only path to sanity. Listen to the astrologers, consult the I Ching, talk to people who claim to be from flying saucers. Now you’re getting somewhere.

The counterculture broke free from what it perceived as the repressive and boring American way of life—nine-to-five at dead-end jobs, short and tidy hair, ranch homes with children in suburbia, a two-car garage, Jesus-worship at a Christian church. Hippies searched for life’s meaning, the truth about themselves, and the world; seeking pulled them in a variety of directions, from isolated New England communes to the mountains of Katmandu to the discovery of Tarot and LSD.⁷³

Hippies dismissed or displayed hostility towards Christianity, the old, irrelevant, and “square” Establishment religion. Injustice, intolerance, and hypocrisy were associated with Western religion—holy wars, inquisitions, colonialist missionaries, the Ku Klux Klan, and churchmen supportive of the Vietnam War. “The Church is the enemy of youth and life,” declared a hip Mississippian. “The western god is in his death throws, is desperate, is defiled, is depraved, has been dead for centuries.” Jesus had

⁷² Joseph Berke, ed., *Counter Culture* (London, 1969), 85; Hopkins, ed., *Hippie Papers*, 17-18; John Sinclair, “Coatpuller,” *Fifth Estate* (Detroit), 15-31 May 1967.

⁷³ Hopkins, ed., *Hippie Papers*, 18; Denver seeker in *Solid Muldoon* (Denver), 27 October 1967.

preached valuable messages, the hip thought, but the Church and Establishment had perverted Christ's philosophy for their own purposes.⁷⁴

Seeking opened the way for spiritual awakenings and the exploration and embracement of various Eastern religions and mysticism. The Hare Krishna movement gained many new adherents, appealing to the counterculture with its Hindu paradises, bhakti music, and communitarian lifestyle. Its champions claimed that Krishna could get one higher than chemical drugs. Buddhism attracted new believers with its emphasis on spiritual and physical discipline and the possibility of liberation from life's troubles. Zen Buddhism, too, claimed new adherents, those who strived for enlightenment by meditating and suppressing the self-consciousness. Others studied Taoism and its yin-yang philosophy in an effort to attain spiritual harmony by living passively. Those who embraced Sufism searched for a "union with God," through poverty, abstinence, and repentance, while championing love. Many hip youth admired the teachings of Indian guru Meher Baba. His devotees opposed drugs, denying that they provided new insights and claimed that religion offered better revelations. The Maharishi Mahesh Yogi was better known than Baba. He popularized Transcendental Meditation, a form of deep relaxation aimed at awakening latent intellect and the development of a new consciousness. Hippies investigated the *I Ching* or *Book of Changes*, tossing three coins and examining its 64 hexagrams, hoping to acquire ancient Chinese wisdom. They also read the 700-verse Hindu poem, the *Bhagavad Gita*. Followers of yoga believed that a combination of diet, meditation, breathing, and various exercises, produced mystic

⁷⁴ Bro. Sartoris Snopes, "Aquarian Trip," *The Kudzu* (Jackson, MS), 3 October 1968; "David Crosby of the Byrds," *Oracle of Southern California* (Los Angeles), October 1967.

euphoria and understanding. Some attempted to enhance their sexual pleasure and prolong sexual intercourse through the ancient East Indian technique of tantric yoga.⁷⁵

Not every seeker turned to the East for answers. One hippie saw religion in everything, “in flowers, sex, music, sunrises, colors, sounds, touch, skin, life.” Other counterculturalists were drawn to the occult, exploring occult metaphysics and the psyche through Tarot card readings. Astrology, Zodiac signs, and horoscopes experienced a resurgence in popularity as the hippies looked to the cosmic forces of the stars for insight. Less popular enthusiasms included nature worship, palmistry, mind reading, fortune telling, ouija boards, and numerology. A few Haight-Ashbury street people practiced witchcraft and black magic.⁷⁶

Hippies also championed love, the supreme countercultural principle. The flower people talked about love incessantly and expressed a wide range of views about love and its importance. They saw it in particular acts, feelings, and objects. As an author who investigated the youth revolt explained, “Love is other, love is being and letting be, love is gentle, love is giving and love is dropping out, love is turning on, love is a trip, a flower, a smile, a bell.” Many hippies were thoroughly convinced that love was the answer to the world’s social problems, that love could end war, the Bomb, greed, fear, suspicion, and intolerance. “All You Need is Love” sang the Beatles and

⁷⁵ Robert S. Ellwood, *The Sixties Spiritual Awakening: American Religion Moving From Modern to Postmodern* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1994), 143-144; J. Milton Yinger, *Countercultures: The Promise and the Peril of a World Turned Upside Down* (New York, 1982), 104; Peter Collier, “The Thinking Man’s Fortune Cookie,” *New York Times*, 18 May 1969, p. BR7; Miller, *Hippies and American Values*, 48; John Bassett McCleary, *The Hippie Dictionary: A Cultural Encyclopedia (and Phraseicon) of the 1960s and 1970s* (Berkeley, 2002), 77, 469, 478-479, 541.

⁷⁶ Snopes, “Aquarian Trip;” McCleary, *Hippie Dictionary*, 34; “Doctrines of the Dropouts,” *Time*, 5 January 1968, 62.

hippies agreed wholeheartedly. Sexual intercourse was thought to be a natural expression of love, while the spiritually-minded felt that God was love. Love represented the antithesis of hate and violence: “Make love, not war.” Hippies also equated it with peace. “There can be no peace unless love is the weapon and the cause,” maintained a female dropout. Love also brought people together and increased the feeling of community and togetherness. Moreover, love was vital for all people. “Every human being needs love and understanding,” stated an Arizonan. “No matter how ugly, how undesirable, he needs to be loved, without reservation, without qualification. A being cannot live without being loved.” Finally, love, according to Lenore Kandel, meant a complete acceptance of another, flaws and all.⁷⁷

Social philosophy on dope and drugs changed since 1965 and 1966. Some hippies challenged counterculture dogma as it related to dope—the notion that LSD produced enlightenment, cosmic consciousness, and religious experiences. “Acid has no value in and of itself,” contended Chester Anderson, it “will not make you holy or good or wise or anything else except high.” Some hippies recommended getting high on self-discovery and the spiritual life as dope no longer provided insights and answers. Dopers also started to worry about the possible adverse effects of LSD: did tripping on acid cause chromosome damage or lead to the birth of deformed children? Singer Pat Boone testified to the latter when he claimed, “We know that some children born to LSD users have had exposed spines, two heads, and other gruesome physical deformities.”

⁷⁷ Toni del Renzio, *The Flower Children* (London, 1969), 59; “The Hippies of Hashberry,” *Ebony*, August 1967, 118; Mike Clevenger, “Memoirs of the Living Dead,” *Rebirth* (Phoenix), Vol. 1, No. 6 (1969); Wolf, *Voices From the Love Generation*, 36.

Underground newspapers frequently addressed the controversy of whether LSD ingestion resulted in chromosome damage. Hip doctor Eugene Schoenfeld concluded in his column “HIPpocrates” that the possibility did indeed exist.⁷⁸

In addition, hippies debated whether dope increased sexual pleasure. Timothy Leary answered in the affirmative, claiming in a *Playboy* interview that a woman could have “several hundred orgasms” during a carefully prepared LSD session. Many hippies, however, did not contemplate having sex while sailing on dope, as their minds were elsewhere. Those who did have intercourse under its influence had experiences that varied widely. A young male maintained that acid increased his sexual stamina, prolonging the experience amid bright colors. Others reported being frightened and having bad experiences. Because marijuana causes time distortion, some individuals might have experienced or perceived prolonged orgasms.⁷⁹

The drug scene also underwent changes since the mid 1960s. The hippies’ drugs of choice remained grass and acid. Some dropouts, however, began using amphetamines, barbiturates, morphine, cocaine, and heroin. Undergrounds newspapers and concerned heads counseled against the use of these “drugs” because they were addictive, harmful, and led to an early death. Writers elucidated the dangers associated with barbiturates and “downers” and they singled out amphetamines or “speed” in particular for censure. “Speed kills,” declared one writer, “It really does. Methedrine

⁷⁸ Hopkins, ed., 68; “Get High,” *Rebirth* (Tucson), Vol. 1, No. 6 (1969); Pat Boone, *A New Song* (Carol Stream, IL, 1970), 181; Eugene Schoenfeld, “Hippocrates,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 18-24 August 1967.

⁷⁹ Timothy Leary, *The Politics of Ecstasy* (New York, 1968), 129; Ray Nelson, “Sex Under LSD,” *Intercourse: A Journal of Sexual Freedom* (Berkeley), undated issue; Miller, *Hippies and American Values*, 40-41.

and amphetamine etc. can and will rot your teeth, freeze your mind and kill your body. The life expectancy of the average speed freak, from first shot to the morgue, is about five years. What a drag.” Furthermore, hippies cautioned against allowing drugs to become the center of one’s existence, as there was more to living and being hip than abusing drugs.⁸⁰

The presence of dope and drugs on college campuses increased. In 1965, only 4.2 percent of graduating seniors at Brooklyn College had smoked grass. That same year, researchers discovered that 10.7 percent of graduate students at a large urban university in southern California had tried marijuana. According to one scholar, “By 1969 the lowest reported incidence of marijuana use in *high schools*, in conservative Utah, was higher than the rate for graduate students in Los Angeles only four years before.” The number of dopers and heads had skyrocketed. A Gallop survey of 57 universities conducted in November 1969 revealed that 32 percent of students had tried marijuana. Other studies reported higher rates of usage. Stanford psychologist Richard H. Blum contended that 57 percent of students at five major California universities had smoked marijuana at least once. In another survey, 85 percent of Yale seniors admitted to having tried it. Students dropped acid, too. A 1969 study at a large eastern university revealed that over 20 percent of men and 15 percent of women had consumed LSD or other hallucinogens. The research also indicated that a small percentage of college students had started to take dangerous drugs like morphine, heroin, and cocaine.⁸¹

⁸⁰ “Downers,” *Der Zeitgeist* (Phoenix), undated issue; Hopkins, ed., *Hippie Papers*, 68-72.

⁸¹ Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, 330; “The New Mood On Campus,” *Newsweek*, 29 December 1969, 42, 44; “The Drug Generation: Growing Younger,” *Newsweek*, 21 April 1969, 107; Pope, *Voices From the Drug Culture*, 7-8.

Rock and roll, like dope, remained vital to the counterculture. Although the Beatles had produced the ultimate counterculture album, other rockers touched on hippie themes, their lyrics making reference to dope and drugs. The Rolling Stones exclaimed, “Something Happened To Me Yesterday,” the Amboy Dukes went on a “Journey to the Center of the Mind,” and a “Purple Haze” swirled around Jimi Hendrix. The Jefferson Airplane’s “White Rabbit” spoke of “uppers” (“One pill makes you larger”) and “downers” (“And the other makes you small”). The Velvet Underground’s Lou Reid sang about putting “a spike” into his vein on “Heroin” and the Doors’ Jim Morrison “couldn’t get much higher” in the tune “Light My Fire.” Not every rocker glorified dope; some protested. “Goddamn the pusherman!” rasped Steppenwolf’s John Kay in a scathing indictment of pernicious drug dealers.⁸²

Rock lyrics also reflected hippie values—love, sex, community, flower power, alternative lifestyles, and questioning authority. “In the end she will surely know I was not born to follow,” sang the Byrds. “We Can Be Together,” proclaimed Jefferson Airplane, while they instructed their fellow counterculturalists to find “Somebody To Love.” Even the bluesy Rolling Stones went through a psychedelic phase, recording “Dandelion” and “We Love You.” The Youngbloods recorded the Jefferson Airplane-penned composition “Get Together,” perhaps the greatest expression of communal values in rock: “Come on people now/Smile on your brother/Everybody get together/Try to love one another right now.” Lyrics pertaining to sex became more explicit. In 1964, the Beatles had been content to “hold your hand;” four years later, Paul McCartney

⁸² Belz, *The Story of Rock*, 170; Garofalo, *Rockin’ Out*, 197, 208; Pichaske, *A Generation in Motion*, 117-119.

asked, “Why Don’t We Do It in the Road?” David Crosby’s “Triad” discussed a ménage trois (“I don’t see why we can’t go on as three”) and the Stones frankly declared, “Let’s Spend the Night Together.”⁸³

In addition to expressing the counterculture’s values and spreading its message, the music itself produced a sense of community. Hippies felt as though they shared with artists and bands a similar outlook, common goals, and the same principles. Beatle George Harrison’s visit to the Hashbury during the Summer of Love is demonstrative of this point. Dressed in flowered pants and denim jacket and sporting heart-shaped sunglasses, Harrison went to “Hippie Hill” in Golden Gate Park. A sizable crowd gathered and followed the “Quiet Beatle” as he walked back toward Haight Street, strumming a guitar. The group of hippies, who had never met Harrison, nevertheless felt a kinship with him. “How does it feel to have the *family* all together?” a hippie asked Harrison. “It’s gettin’ better all the time,” he responded. Similarly, Ron Thelin said of the Beatles: “You feel like brothers. You feel like you meet John Lennon, you’re going to know your friend. Any one of those cats, you’re going to be able to talk to him, one to one; eye to eye. The vision of their feeling we can share. It’s beautiful.”⁸⁴

The counterculture embodied more than a seeking, loving, “do your own thing,” dope, and rock and roll philosophy, for the hippies stood against Cold War culture, opposing the majority’s values and ideas. The counterculture hated the “meaningless abstractions” invoked during times of war—“nation,” “country,” “flag,” “state,” and

⁸³ Garofalo, *Rockin’ Out*, 198-199, 201, 209-210; Pichaske, *A Generation in Motion*, 109, 113; Robert G. Pielke, *Rock Music in American Culture: The Sounds of Revolution* (Jefferson, NC, 2012), 173; Anderson, *Movement and the Sixties*, 248.

⁸⁴ David Swanston, “A Beatle Does His Thing,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 8 August 1967, p. 3; Wolf, *Voices From the Love Generation*, 218.

“honor”—for the Establishment employed these terms to appeal to those who would fight and kill. Hippies also deplored what they perceived as the common emotions and behavior of the mainstream: greed, hate, fear, paranoia, and racial discrimination.⁸⁵

Dropouts disdained the rat race, the frantic day-to-day scramble. People worked for most of their lives at “good jobs” and the rewards, the hippies argued, were few. The Mister and Missus Joneses of America ended up old and tired. Hippies did not value respectability, competition, “keeping up with the Joneses,” security, wealth, and material possessions, for these things did not bring contentment and fulfillment. On the contrary, freaks averred that these concepts made living difficult, miserable, and frustrating. Counterculturalists wanted to do away with the realities of mainstream daily life—schedules, routines, titles, rules, and responsibilities. Simple living was the key to true happiness.⁸⁶

Freaks also took issue with the Protestant work ethic. Hippies did not oppose all work, only meaningless work and work that led to harming people. They valued meaningful, productive, and creative exertions—playing music, acting in a theatre group, writing for an underground newspaper, aiding a friend, and the community. Ideal occupations included independent crafts—making leather or jewelry products—or owning a hip shop. Longhairs respected play as much as work. They especially favored and enjoyed fun work. “Believe me when I say: if you enjoy it, it can still be good; it can still be “work” (only we’ll call it “play”), Tuli Kupferberg wrote. “Play is as good

⁸⁵ Jesse Kornbluth, ed., *Notes From the New Underground: An Anthology* (New York, 1968), 206.

⁸⁶ Guy Strait, “What is a Hippie?” *Haight-Ashbury Maverick* (San Francisco), April 1967; Miller, *Hippies and American Values*, 112.

as work. Work has been defined as something you dislike doing. Fuck that. Do the Beatles work? Who cares. We like what they do.” Although fun work was nice, the best kind of work, hip youth thought, bettered society and made a “difference in human terms.”⁸⁷

Hippies also railed against their chief enemy: the Establishment and its supporters. Politicians, the military, bureaucrats, teachers, and cops forced their will on others—and hippies resisted. The Establishment, its power, and the nefarious consequences of that power represented everything the counterculture opposed.

The power structure is corrupt—the power creates sickness, the power fucks up what it was intended to heal, the power creates war, death; it tolerates poverty, arrests people, imprisons them, destroys foreign cultures physically and emotionally, turns—via the mass media—its own citizens into zombies who attack whatever is pointed out to them.⁸⁸

While opposing the Establishment, the counterculture soon began a momentous and chaotic year: 1968. During 1968, youth arose to confront the established political and economic order in every industrialized nation on earth. Radical students erected barricades and grappled with police on Paris’s streets, while in Czechoslovakia, democratic Communists championing “socialism with a human face” resisted invading Soviet tanks and troops. America, too, became engulfed in tumult. In January, North Vietnamese regulars and Viet Cong guerrillas launched the Tet Offensive, invading every major city in South Vietnam. The attack undermined the credibility of officials in Washington who had been assuring the public that America was winning the war. In

⁸⁷ Perry, *Human Be-In*, 115; Sherri Cavan, *Hippies of the Haight* (St. Louis, 1972), 85-93; Berke, ed., *Counter Culture*, 85; “Roving Rat Fink,” *Berkeley Barb*, 4-10 July 1969.

⁸⁸ Kupferberg, “The Politics of Love,” *East Village Other* (New York), 1-15 May 1967.

March, Lyndon Johnson shocked the nation and temporarily boosted anti-war forces when he announced he would not seek another term as president. The “Year of the Barricades” also witnessed two assassinations: James Earl Ray gunned down Martin Luther King, Jr. in April and Sirhan Sirhan did the same to Robert Kennedy in June. In the two years proceeding May 1969, universities turned into battlegrounds; there were 25 bombings, 46 cases of arson, 207 campus buildings were occupied, and police arrested over 6,000 students.⁸⁹

Defining the counterculture in the late 1960s presents a complex and formidable task. Most scholars argue that the New Left and counterculture represented distinct phenomena. Others contest this interpretation, arguing against this perspective in its entirety or minimizing the differences between the two camps. Because sex, dope, rock, beads, and bellbottoms became common enthusiasms and features of radical youth culture at this time, it is difficult to discern where the New Left and counterculture overlapped or converged or diverged, distinguishing where “protest ended and lifestyle began.” Most scholars agree that the lines separating the two strands of the youth rebellion faded or blurred, though the extent to which this occurred has not been deeply investigated or elucidated.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Campus statistics in John Morton Blum, *Years of Discord: American Politics and Society, 1961-1974* (New York, 1991), 357.

⁹⁰ Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 165; For New Left and counterculture as distinct phenomena see Matusow, *The Unraveling of America*; Cauter, *Year of the Barricades*; Rorabaugh, *Berkeley At War*; Thomas Frank, *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism* (Chicago, 1997); Stewart Burns, *Social Movements of the 1960s: Searching For Democracy* (Boston, 1990); Miller, *Hippies and American Values*; Jack Whalen and Richard Flacks, *Beyond the Barricades: The Sixties Generation Grows Up* (Philadelphia, 1989); Gitlin, *The Sixties*; For those who contest the traditional interpretation see Howard Brick, *Age of Contradiction: American Thought and Culture in the 1960s* (New York, 1998); McBride, “Death City Radicals: The Counterculture in Los

A partial blending of the New Left and counterculture did indeed occur. More and more hippies showed up at anti-war demonstrations and many New Leftists engaged in countercultural behavior. By 1968, the counterculture consisted of hippie purists—concerned exclusively with cultural matters—and those who expressly mixed politics with alternative lifestyles: the Youth International Party (Yippies) and the White Panther Party. Yippies, hip politicians, and hippie activists became indistinguishable. Yet, despite the blurring and fading of the lines dividing the New Left and counterculture, those lines, with some exceptions, ultimately remained intact. The divisions that set apart the two entities at mid-decade persisted, as did the animosity.

Within SDS, the period in which one became politically active was a crucial determining factor in how one perceived the counterculture. SDS's Old Guard remained wary and skeptical of it. The charter generation could hardly be characterized as "hippie-dippie." In 1967, Todd Gitlin doubted whether a single member of the Old Guard had taken LSD and "most were leery even of marijuana." Gitlin and others felt that drugs would undermine youth's commitment to the world's oppressed. He also sensed that drugs might vitiate the discipline necessary to sustain political movements.⁹¹

SDS's New Guard—the "Prairie Power" generation—had no such concerns; one could maintain their radical politics, they believed, and still take part in the drug culture. The New Left and counterculture moved closer together, as the counterculture gradually influenced and penetrated the New Left. New Leftists began challenging majority social

Angeles," in McMillian and Buhle, eds., *The New Left Revisited*; Richard Candida-Smith, *Utopia and Dissent: Art, Politics, and Poetry in California* (Berkeley, 1995); Stephens, *Anti-Disciplinary Protest*.

⁹¹ Gitlin, *The Sixties*, 212, 225.

and cultural ethics. By the late 1960s the two phenomena held much in common; many anti-war demonstrators and self-proclaimed revolutionaries embraced dope, liberated sexuality, rock music, hip clothing, and long hair.

New Left and counterculture converged somewhat at Columbia University in April, when SDS and African-American radicals seized and occupied five buildings for eight days before New York authorities regained the campus. Students smoked dope, called each other brother and sister, made love, and referred to occupied buildings as “liberated zones” and “communes.”⁹²

Some hippies emphasized commonalities with polticos, arguing that dropping out was political. For these hippies, spurning the dominant American culture represented a political—even revolutionary—act. As a one hippie explained it in the *Berkeley Barb*:

Yes, we are political; yes, we are revolutionaries; yes, we represent by the way we live a complete break with the American way of life. Yes, we stand for a new culture based on cooperation, love, and peace rather than competition, hate, and violence Yes, there is a revolution going on in the world and a fight to the death between two social orders, two ways of living and thinking.⁹³

And some New Leftists contended that the hippies shared their values, arguing that the hippies’ alternative lifestyles and rejection of the mainstream was “eminently political.” They also recognized that the hippies carried out ideals set forth in SDS’s *Port Huron Statement*. The counterculture, in the Haight-Ashbury and elsewhere, encouraged “participatory democracy” and engaged in community organizing, combating “depersonalization” and “isolation.”⁹⁴

⁹² Allen Young, “Columbia Lives,” *Washington Free Press*, 18 May 1968.

⁹³ Kornbluth, ed., *Notes From the New Underground*, 284.

⁹⁴ Dennis Jarrett, “Blood Sugar,” *Great Speckled Bird* (Atlanta), 2-15 August 1968; See also Roszak, *Making of a Counter Culture*, 56-59.

By 1968, Carl Davidson famously contended that three-quarters of SDS membership could be classified as hippies. “The revolution is about our lives” became a popular slogan among political activists. As historian Doug Rossinow has demonstrated, New Leftists “fused their desire for individual empowerment with their dissident cultural politics.” Like the counterculture, SDSers distrusted centralized bureaucracy; instead, they favored a more loose organization, as that arrangement seemed the embodiment of participatory democracy. New Leftists also battled alienation by seeking authenticity and a better way of life, ideals and goals the hippies shared. And like dropouts, they struggled to create a culture based on spontaneity, love, and community, which would constitute the foundation of a new, natural society. The “New Left’s counterculture,” however, differed from the hippie counterculture, because it “carried a sharper political edge.” New Leftists—no matter how deeply they delved into hippiedom—always maintained their political commitments, fighting for democracy and justice, while confronting the political status quo. Michael Kazin, for example, explained his relationship to the counterculture this way:

I liked rock music and I did LSD, mescaline, peyote, and lots of marijuana, [but] I didn’t feel allegiance with what seemed to be the ideology of it. I was always political . . . and I thought it was flabby thinking and people were fooling themselves about how people were going to change. You know, the old ‘You have to change yourself first to change society’ kind of thing . . . I was always on the side of the politicians.”⁹⁵

Ironically, at the moment the New Left and counterculture moved closer

⁹⁵ Dennis Jarrett, “Blood Sugar,” Doug Rossinow, “‘The Revolution Is about Our Lives’: The New Left’s Counterculture,” in *Imagine Nation*, ed. Braunstein and Doyle, 99-100; Klatch, *A Generation Divided*, 142-143.

together, strains between the two poles heightened drastically, growing more intense.

Hippies were extremely skeptical—and in many cases, outright hostile—towards the concept of a political revolution and violence. Violent revolution was antithetical to the hippie ethos, as it almost certainly involved the possibility of killing and bloodshed. As talk of revolution among New Leftists increased in 1968 and 1969, the hippies expressed their concerns. “When you pick up a gun and learn to kill, the part of you that loved flowers and simple things will die!” a freak said to a friend. Killing for peace made no sense to the hip; radicals seemed to be advancing the same tactics and principles as the Establishment. “Are you asking us to pick up our guns and fight for peace and freedom?” asked a hippie named Gemini. “That’s what our government is telling us to do . . . in Vietnam.”⁹⁶

Hippies also opposed revolution because they tended to go astray. “Tell me of one successful revolution,” challenged a cynical John Lennon. “Who fucked up communism-christianity-capitalism-buddhism, etc? Sick heads and nothing else.” Furthermore, political radicals and revolutionaries did not offer greater solutions or greater forms of government. Perhaps, dropouts thought, the revolutionaries would prove to be as bad as the Establishment. “The revolutionaries even if ‘successful’ will only repeat the mistakes of what they oppose in new guises,” explained the *East Village Other*. “The cycle of despair will repeat itself. And at what sacrifices!”⁹⁷

The release of the Beatles single “Revolution” exposed the rift between politics

⁹⁶ Mike Wheelock, “Is Love Dead?” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 22 November 1968; “Letters,” *Fifth Estate* (Detroit), 28 November – 11 December 1968.

⁹⁷ Ethel Grodzins Romm, *The Open Conspiracy: What America’s Angry Generation is Saying* (New York 1970), 108; Kupferberg, “The Politics of Love.”

and culture. The song's lyrics expressed John Lennon's skepticism of political revolution. The tune explicitly put-down Maoists: "But if you go carryin' pictures of Chairman Mao/You ain't gonna make it with anyone anyhow." It also made clear the Beatles' position on violence: "But when you talk about destruction/Don't you know that you can count me out." Finally, the song advocated the countercultural philosophy of turning inward, changing one's own head, and liberating oneself: "You tell me it's the institution/Well you know/You better free your mind instead."⁹⁸

On at least one campus, hippies and members of SDS fought over "Revolution's" philosophy. A former student at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey, recalled, "I vividly remember a food fight that happened at the Ledge [a student hangout] when 'Revolution' came on the juke box right after 'Street Fighting Man' and this fight broke out between the hippies and the people in SDS We were literally throwing food at each other over whether or not a political revolution was appropriate."⁹⁹

Radical politicians censured the song for its "clear unmistakable call for counter-revolution." A *Berkeley Barb* writer contended that the tune sounded "like the 'hawk plank'" adopted by the "National Demokratik Death Party." The *Barb* also articulated its displeasure that the Beatles criticized Chairman Mao, while neglecting to attack the American or British Establishment. Finally, the writer excoriated the band for its unwillingness to contribute to the cause of revolution.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ "Beatles Revolution: Two Views," *The Seed* (Chicago), Vol. 2, No. 13 (1968).

⁹⁹ Farber, "The Counterculture and the Anti-War Movement," in Small and Hoover, eds., *Give Peace A Chance*, 14.

¹⁰⁰ "Beatles Revolution: Two Views."

An advocate of revolution penned an angry letter to John Lennon. “In order to change the world,” his letter read, “we’ve got to understand what’s wrong with the world. And then—destroy it. Ruthlessly.” Lennon’s reply eminently represented the position of cultural revolutionaries, who maintained that the revolution could happen one person at a time. If enough people went through personal transformations, changing their values and perspectives, politics and the world generally would change. “You’re obviously on a destruction kick,” Lennon retorted. “I’ll tell you what’s wrong with it—People—so you want to destroy them? Ruthlessly? Until you/we change your/our heads there’s no chance.” Counterculturalists endeavored to create new societies, not tear them down, and Lennon finished his letter conveying this idea: “(P.S. You smash it—and I’ll build around it.)”¹⁰¹

Many hippies still believed in dope’s revolutionary potential. Why engage in a violent, bloody political revolution, dope revolutionists thought, when the same end result could be achieved by taking acid? “These drugs are potent,” a head wrote. “They are changing personalities and the way people relate.” And radical heads were convinced that dope had the potential to transform political realities. “After I took it, [LSD] it opened my eyes,” Paul McCartney told *Life*. “We only use one tenth of our brain. Just think what all we could accomplish if we could only tap that hidden part! It would mean a whole new world. If the politicians would take LSD, there wouldn’t be any more war, or poverty or famine.”¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Romm, *The Open Conspiracy*, 108.

¹⁰² “Acid Rock and Revolution,” *The Seed* (Chicago), Vol. 2, No. 10 (1968); Thomas Thompson, “The New Far-Out Beatles,” *Life*, 16 June 1967, 105.

Although many New Leftists had embraced hippie values, others did not, and as a result, counterculturalists continued to perceive fundamental differences between themselves and politicians. “Many of the so-called political leaders are a drag,” commented Grace Slick of Jefferson Airplane. “They’re not interested in our culture and its values.” Furthermore, politicians bored and annoyed hippies with their long-winded speeches, rants, and announcements. “It’s boring, man,” continued Slick, “It’s like listening to Nixon talk, only they have long hair.”¹⁰³

Many New Leftists, too, continued to have misgivings about the counterculture. Marxist radicals within the Progressive Labor faction of SDS disdained the counterculture for its escapism. They also believed that hippies sapped the strength of political movements, and alienated the working-class, preventing potential student-worker alliances. Maoists and Trotskyists dressed conservatively, eschewing hippie accoutrements, while maintaining short hair and clean-shaven faces. Furthermore, they tried to enforce a cultural conservatism, looking down at dope-smokers and occasionally ousting members who had extramarital affairs.¹⁰⁴

Non-revolutionary liberal and moderate activists also remained skeptical of the counterculture. Many young MOBE members did not look like hippies, nor did they find sex, drugs, and rock and roll particularly interesting. Conventionally dressed youth attended MOBE conferences. A *Chicago Tribune* reporter attending a conference noted that MOBE members took their business seriously. Only one person, an African-

¹⁰³ Katzman, *Our Time*, 203-204.

¹⁰⁴ Rossinow, ““The Revolution Is about Our Lives,”” in Braunstein and Doyle, eds., *Imagine Nation*, 101.

American man, wore beads.¹⁰⁵

Prominent philosophical divisions distinguished revolutionary New Leftists from the counterculture. Revolutionaries believed that American institutions needed to be abolished so that individuals could truly be free. Liberation required a confrontation, perhaps a violent one, with the Establishment. “If we want freedom, we must fight for it. It won’t be handed to us. It can’t be,” opined the Boston underground *Old Mole*. “Human freedom has always required struggle.” Furthermore, New Leftists were deeply concerned about not only their own freedom, but the freedom of others as well, especially oppressed peoples in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and minorities stateside. Political revolutionaries sought to liberate these oppressed peoples, something hippies had little interest in doing: “None of us is free until we are all free.”¹⁰⁶

The Yippies did not believe in classifying young outlaws. On New Years Day 1968, Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin took LSD together and concocted a strategy for social change: combining political activism with hippiedom. Paul Krassner, editor of the *Realist*, suggested a name—“Yippie!”—and the Youth International Party was born. Yippie would be a rallying point for political hippies, a “blending of pot and politics.” As hybrid counterculturalists, Yippies welded cultural and political militancy. They were part hippie—extolling the virtues of sex, dope, rock and roll, dancing, and building the new society, and part New Left—overtly political, instigating confrontations with police, speaking of revolution, while claiming solidarity with struggling Vietnamese

¹⁰⁵ David Farber, *Chicago '68* (New York, 1988), 89.

¹⁰⁶ Jon Supek, “The Hip Radical – What’s Ahead?” *The Old Mole* (Boston), 13 September 1968; Melody Kilian, “All You Need is Love,” *Space City News* (Houston), 5 June 1969.

peasant guerillas and blacks. Hoffman and Rubin became the most visible spokespeople for the youth movement and the most famous radical celebrities of the sixties. They sought to galvanize America's youth to action through media manipulation and by baffling the middle-class. The founders of YIP had essentially created a mythical organization and they used the media to cultivate the myth.¹⁰⁷

The Yippies, as a hybrid counterculturalists and radicals, idolized black militants and sought their blessing. Yippies claimed solidarity with the Black Panthers. Abbie Hoffman demanded "immediate freedom for Huey Newton of the Black Panthers and all other black people." The Panthers and Yippies eventually made an alliance; in October 1968, Jerry Rubin and Stew Albert signed a "YIPanther" Pact with Cleaver. The Yippies also appropriated the Panthers' polarizing and vitriolic language, employing terms like "pig." Other champions of Black Power disliked hippies. Hoffman came to the defense of the counterculture when SNCC chairman H. Rap Brown sneered at "flower power" and put the hippies down.¹⁰⁸

The Yippies planned a massive demonstration at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago during the last week of August. Hoffman and Rubin centered the protest around a "Festival of Life," which would serve as an alternative to the "death politics" of the convention. The Yippies enticed youth with talk of a nude grope-in, joint-rolling competition, popular rock bands, free food, guerrilla theater, and workshops on drugs. They planned to nominate a pig—Pigasus—for president and after he won the

¹⁰⁷ Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 206-208; Abbie Hoffman, *Revolution For the Hell of It* (New York, 1968), 102; Peck, *Uncovering the Sixties*, 100-102; Gitlin, *The Sixties*, 235.

¹⁰⁸ Raskin, *For the Hell of It*, 109-110, 155; Jezer, *Abbie Hoffman*, 177-178.

election, they pledged to devour him. In the months before the convention, the Yippies predicted that there would be violence, while continuing to promulgate their outrageous rhetoric: “We will burn Chicago to the ground,” “We will fuck on the beaches!” “We demand the Politics of Ecstasy!” “Acid for all!” and “Abandon the Creeping Meatball!” But when the Yippies actually met to discuss the details of Chicago, they did not converse about sex, drugs, rock and roll; they talked of party politics and political strategy. The Yippies wanted a confrontation with authorities in Chicago.¹⁰⁹

The Yippies were not entirely successful at bridging the gulf between hippies and radical politicians, as they received harsh criticism from both. Movement people distrusted the YIPs, for they found the Yippies too countercultural. Politicians at the March 22-23, 1968 Lake Villa Conference before the DNC generally tried to avoid them. Very few people felt pleased by their appearance. Eric Weinburger, the MOBE’s young treasurer, worried that the Yippies were too apolitical. He also feared that they would dilute anti-war protest. David Dellinger of the MOBE, years after the conference, criticized Hoffman and Company for their irresponsibility and hedonism. Dellinger found their rhetoric to be “fantasies” and “bullshit” and further asserted that their culture largely mirrored the dominant culture they tried to reject. Lew Jones of the Marxist-Trotskyist Young Socialist Alliance (YSA) called the Yippies “regressive” and charged them with being a part of a “sick escapist milieu.”¹¹⁰

The Yippies harbored distaste for politicians, too. They found the political Left, especially Progressive Labor, boring, Puritanical, and hopelessly ideological. “Act first.

¹⁰⁹ Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 214-215; Raskin, *For the Hell Of It*, 132-133.

¹¹⁰ Farber, *Chicago '68*, 89.

Analyze later,” Rubin wrote. “Impulse—not theory—makes the great leaps forward.” Abbie Hoffman discussed his feelings for the MOBE leadership with the Walker Study Team, which investigated the events at Chicago. “They all wear suits and ties, they sit down, they talk rationally, they use the same kind of words,” Hoffman said. “I’m into emotion. I’m into symbols and gestures and I don’t have a program and I don’t have an ideology and I’m not a part of the Left.”¹¹¹

The Yippies ruffled and polarized activists, but they also caused a rift within the counterculture. Although the Yippies qualified as counterculturalists and espoused cultural revolution, hippie purists opposed them. Hippie purists—who constituted the vast majority of the counterculture—rejected politics entirely, even politics combined with hippie values, behavior, and rhetoric. Purists attempted to drop out of majority society—and politics—completely; for these individuals, hippiedom remained a highly individualistic experience, a personal journey. Hippies strived to discover and transform themselves. The revolution, they believed, could occur in one’s own mind. For purists, the counterculture also largely remained concerned with matters of culture. They altered the way they lived, changed their values, and transformed their perspectives on life and the world around them. Most hippies continued their quests for self-liberation and focused on building the new society. While New Leftists marched, seized campuses, and grappled with cops, hippie purists meditated, attended love-ins and rock festivals, cultivated their alternative societies in cities, settled in rural communes, or hitchhiked America, Europe, Asia, and the Middle-East. Although purists sided with demonstrators

¹¹¹ Rubin, *Do It!*, 116; Hoffman quoted in Raskin, *For the Hell of It*, 136.

against the war, they found direct political agitation largely ineffectual. “We’re not that active,” a dropout commented. “We say yay! the pickets, and we stand and watch them and agree with ‘em but we’re not gonna be the ones right in there because, you know, nothing much is gonna get done, and its just being ridiculous.” A Los Angeles communard expressed the same sentiment. “Man, to me all that bullshit about peace and war and integration and all that is just part of that other plastic world, man,” spat Gridley Wright of Strawberry Fields commune. “You wouldn’t catch me dead at a fuckin’ peace demonstration.” And his attitude was typical of purists throughout the late sixties.¹¹²

Months before the Democratic Convention, purists came out against the Yippies and their designs for Chicago. Doctor Eugene Shoenfeld, in his underground newspaper column “HIPpocrates,” identified the differences between yippies and hippies, associating Hoffman and company with New Leftists. “All Yippies are not Hippies,” he wrote. “One should distinguish pacifistic hippie from New Left groups.” Hippies did not think of themselves as “Marxist acidheads” or “psychedelic Bolsheviks” as the Yippies did—they wanted no part of the expected confrontation. Abe Peck, editor of the *Seed*, issued several warnings. He argued that there could be no rock festival, which had been the primary draw for hippies. “If you’re coming to Chicago, be sure to wear some armor in your hair,” he cautioned, and “Don’t come to Chicago if you expect a five-day Festival of Life, music, and love.”¹¹³

Hippie purists also chastised the Yippies because they remained skeptical of

¹¹² Carey, *The College Drug Scene*, 17; Yablonsky, *The Hippie Trip*, 72-73.

¹¹³ Eugene Shoenfeld, “All Yippies, NOT Hippies,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 21-27 June 1968; Peck, 109; Abe Peck, “Yippies,” *Distant Drummer* (Philadelphia), Vol. 1, No. 11 (1968); “Don’t Come to Chicago!” *Avatar* (Boston), 16-29 August 1968.

leaders and movements. John Kois, writing for the *Milwaukee Kaleidoscope* in an article entitled “The Yippee Shuck,” exposed and condemned Jerry Rubin as a movement politico who thought in terms of leaders, followers, and press releases. Kois asserted that interest in political causes were waning among youth, and, consequently, the Yippies had integrated themselves into the counterculture by exploiting the “New Music” and “new lifestyle.” Jann Wenner, editor of *Rolling Stone*, a magazine entirely devoted to rock music, denounced the Yippies, too, calling them a “self-appointed coterie of political ‘radicals’ without a legitimate constituency.” Moreover, Wenner believed that the Yippies promoted the Festival of Life and exploited rock and roll in the hopes of luring unsuspecting hippies into senseless violence at the convention.¹¹⁴

The West coast hippies also opposed the Festival of Life. The San Francisco Diggers came out against the Yippies. The Diggers disliked Hoffman for allegedly stealing their ideas when he formed the New York Diggers. The San Francisco Diggers also abhorred the Yippies’ use of the media to aggrandize themselves.¹¹⁵

The Yippies had predicted that more than 40 bands and 500,000 young people would attend. In the end, no more than 10,000 people came to Chicago. The rock bands did not show, either; MC5 was the only act to perform at the Festival of Life. Yippies, Members of the MOBE, SDSers, radicals, and moderates backing Eugene McCarthy came to Chicago. Most of the hippies stayed home and avoiding the bloodshed. Chicago cops chanting “Kill, kill, kill,” initiated a “police riot,” clubbing and bloodying

¹¹⁴ John Kois, “The Yippee Shuck,” *Kaleidoscope* (Milwaukee), 10-23 May 1968; Jann Wenner, “Musicians Reject New Political Exploiters,” *Rolling Stone*, 11 May 1968, 1, 22.

¹¹⁵ “The New Order,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 6 September 1968; Raskin, *For the Hell Of It*, 128.

yippies, revolutionaries, anti-war demonstrators, reporters, and innocent bystanders.¹¹⁶

After the convention, hippies blasted yippies. Hoffman and Rubin, skillful at using the media, had successfully taken over the hippie image in the popular press, much to the chagrin of purists who resented that hippie was becoming synonymous with politics and activism among the general public. Hippies did not preach political revolution, believe in violence, or fight with police. New York counterculturalist Ed Sanders, who had been at Chicago, told Allen Ginsberg afterwards, “I will never again compromise and make a political alliance with people who have violence in their hearts.” Hippie purists unleashed their wrath on yippies and longhaired New Leftists—the bead-wearing “phony flower children” who shouted “pig” at the police—in the underground press:

To someone on the outside he [may] look like one of the hip people. But the similarity is only physical . . . he is actually just another crummy demagogue who thinks he must destroy the world in order to save it. They may seek the same goals as we but the goals aren't important. The means are what counts. Here is the real difference between us. Not whether one does or doesn't believe in an intolerant, suffocating social and political system, but whether one will use violence on other human beings in order to change things.¹¹⁷

Yippies found fault with purists, too. Abbie Hoffman did not believe in dope revolution absent politics; revolution demanded action, not dropping out. “The revolution is more than digging rock or turning on,” he wrote in *Woodstock Nation*. “The revolution is about coming together in a struggle for change. It is about the

¹¹⁶ Yippies, “Festival of Life,” *Distant Drummer* (Philadelphia), Vol. 1, No. 11 (1968); Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 219-220; Farber, *Chicago '68*, 165-207.

¹¹⁷ Sanders quoted in Larry Sloman, *Steal This Dream: Abbie Hoffman and the Countercultural Revolution in America* (New York, 1998), 158; “More letters,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 15 November 1968.

destruction of a system based on bosses and competition and the building of a new community based on people and cooperation.”¹¹⁸

Like the Youth International Party, the White Panther Party was a hybrid counterculture organization that successfully blended revolutionary politics with dissident lifestyles. After witnessing police brutality at the DNC in Chicago, founder John Sinclair decided that the movement—including the counterculture—needed to organize politically for self-defense purposes. He also strived to politicize the youth culture on a national scale. In autumn 1968, Sinclair, influenced by the Yippies and Black Panther Party, formed the White Panthers in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The Panthers believed in rock and roll’s revolutionary potential and they eventually evolved into a confrontational political organization dedicated to “a total assault on the culture by any means necessary.” The organization spread its revolutionary message of “rock and roll, dope and fucking in the streets” with the assistance of the politically charged band MC-5, managed by Sinclair. Other aims of the party included an endorsement of the Black Panthers’ ten-point platform, free food, free clothes, free drugs, and “total freedom for everybody.” In addition to cultural radicalism, the White Panthers espoused revolution in political terms; member Pun Plamondon issued statements urging his brothers to “get a gun,” while Sinclair advanced his “youth colony” thesis, calling on the exploited young to rise up and join forces with other colonized peoples to “put the corpse of capitalism and imperialism to rest forever.”¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ Abbie Hoffman, *Woodstock Nation: A Talk-Rock Album* (New York, 1969), 77.

¹¹⁹ Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 217-218; Jeff A. Hale, “The White Panthers’ ‘Total Assault on the Culture,’” in *Imagine Nation*, ed. Braunstein and Doyle, 125-151; “White Panther Manifesto,” *San*

Hippie purists slammed the White Panthers like they did the yippies. For purists, love continued to be the solution to the world's ills, not violence. "It seems like all the cats who write for your paper [Detroit's *Fifth Estate*] can do is put down the Beatles and talk about blowing things up. Tell 'em all to get SCREWED!" opined a disturbed hippie. "If you preach peace and love and base your lives on this you will go on forever. Real peace cannot be destroyed. I wish some of these bastards would open their eyes and see where fighting has always got us. Nowhere!"¹²⁰

Hippie dropouts had grown weary of political revolution and militancy, rhetorical or real. "People dropped out of the straight world to seek their buried humanity," a disgruntled purist proclaimed. "They now must drop out from the 'underground,' which, thanks to the New Left, would pervert their Love to the cause of destruction."¹²¹

In October 1968 in New York, the *East Village Other* announced the Rediscover America Be-In and criticized belligerent radicals: "We who have been hassled by the cops and militant revolutionaries who would have us kill own fathers (Oedipus-hunters), have given us all very bad vibrations and almost made us think that the world is a musky mean place when we all know it isn't."¹²²

Beset by revolution-preaching New Leftists and hybrid counterculturalists, hippie purists became even more determined to "do their own thing." Although they waned in frequency after 1967, love-ins and be-ins continued to be held. In Los Angeles on Easter Sunday, between 3,500 and 4,000 youngsters frolicked in Elysian Park, while 5,000

Francisco Express Times, 13 November 1968; "Ideology of the White Panther Party (Draft)," Box 17, Folder 23, John and Leni Sinclair Papers, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

¹²⁰ "Letters," *Fifth Estate* (Detroit), 28 November – 11 December 1968.

¹²¹ "More Letters," *Los Angeles Free Press*, 15 November 1968.

¹²² "Be-In!" *East Village Other* (New York), 4 October 1968.

attended a love-in at Tapia Park. Cultural activism continued, too. In March, roughly 200 men and women protested public nudity laws, disrobing at a “nude-in” at San Gregorio Beach in California. Hippies also attended three significant outdoor rock festivals: The Newport Pop Festival in Costa Mesa, California; the Sky River Rock Festival, located an hour from Seattle; and the Miami Pop Festival.¹²³

But hippies did not successfully evade the social, cultural, and political upheavals of the era. Some freaks felt as though they were fighting for their survival against a fascist “Amerika.” Writings of an apocalyptic nature emerged in undergrounds. “The ship is going down,” announced the *East Village Other*. “If we are not physically destroyed or imprisoned—our whole lives will become contaminated by the society—they will not become like us—we will become like them.” The nation seemed to be on the precipice of a second civil war with the country’s fate hanging in the balance. Hippies wondered if the representatives of the New Age would triumph over the representatives of the Old Order. “Are we coming now to a new age of freedom and joy or shall we first have to go through a time of civil war and chaos worse than any we have known before?” a hip Floridian wondered.¹²⁴

The mainstream only exacerbated the overwhelming sense of social disintegration. The social, cultural, and political movements of the decade—and the upheaval that resulted because of them—engendered a substantial backlash from the American majority. These angry individuals turned against liberals who they blamed for

¹²³ William Drummond, “Police Arrest 76 Hippies at Easter Love-in Festivities,” *Los Angeles Times*, 15 April 1968, p. 3; “San Gregorio Nude-In Cool,” *Berkeley Barb*, 29 March – 4 April 1968; Santelli, *Aquarius Rising*, 61-85.

¹²⁴ Kupferberg, “The Politics of Love;” “What’s Happening Here?,” *Aquarian* (Tampa Bay), 30 October 1969.

tolerating and even encouraging black riots. Self-proclaimed patriots also fumed at liberals, moralists, pacifists, and “traitors” who opposed the Vietnam War. In the fall of 1969, a poll revealed that 69 percent of the public felt that anti-war protestors were “harmful to American life.” Such citizens plastered bumper stickers on their vehicles: “America: Love It or Leave It.” They demanded law and order and yearned for the country’s unity. And it was the hippies that shocked, threatened, and angered these mainstream citizens the most, for the counterculture represented a radical affront to the American way of life and the nation’s dominant morality, values, conventions, and traditions.¹²⁵

Many Americans distrusted or detested hippies. As pariahs of the culture, few freaks encouraged or committed acts of hostility or violence against “straights.” Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of their adversaries. Restaurant owners hung signs—“Hippies not served here” and billboards along highways communicated anti-hippie messages—“Keep America Clean: Take a Bath,” and “Keep America Clean: Get a Haircut.” Most Americans made no distinction between anti-war activists and hippies, believing that those who wore long hair, beards, beads, and outrageous clothes belonged to a monolithic movement. The exploits of the Yippies at the 1968 Democratic National Convention fixed indelibly in the minds of average citizens the idea that political radicals and hippies were the same. The *Chicago Tribune*, for example, ran the headline “Cops, Hippies War in Street” the morning following the clash on Michigan Avenue. Furthermore, mainstream citizens associated dropouts with two of the most

¹²⁵ Godfrey Hodgson, *The World Turned Right Side Up: A History of the Conservative Ascendancy in America* (New York, 1996), 115-118; Farber, *Age of Great Dreams*, 167-168.

stereotyped and despised peoples of Cold War culture: atheistic Communists and gays. Members of the public penned vitriolic letters to underground newspapers. “We the decent law-abiding CHRISTIAN people of this great nation will not tolerate for long the infectious venom that is spewed from you socialist serpents,” opined a woman from Brighton, New York. She went on to reference her son and his fellow marines and the fate that awaited longhairs: “What they are doing to damned cong will be a picnic compared to what you Kommie Kooks will get, so you better shave those beards and cut your girly hair before they do it for you. You swine.”¹²⁶

Such hatred led some to advocate murder. A New Mexico man believed hippies “should be slaughtered like pigs.” So did the anonymous individual who wrote to the underground paper *Open City*: “Let me tell you that us Patriotic Americans are just waiting for the day when they declare Open Season on you Commies and beatnik Slobs! When the day comes, we’ll gun down your long hair ‘Pansey generation’ like dogs!”¹²⁷ This hatred amounted to more than mere talk. Teenage gangs shouting, “kill the hippies” attacked cultural activists holding a nighttime candlelight procession in Boston. The most brutal treatment of counterculturalists occurred in the most conservative regions of the country, the South, West, and Southwest. In Atlanta, criminals firebombed a cooperative store. They also peppered seven youths with shotgun pellets in a drive-by; police later incarcerated six of the hospitalized hippies for disturbing the peace. Snipers also put 27 bullet holes in the front of Ron and Susie Jarvis’s craft shop,

¹²⁶ Michael E. Brown, “The Condemnation and Persecution of Hippies,” *Trans-Action*, September 1969, 36; “Cops, Hippies War in Street,” *Chicago Tribune*, 29 August 1968, p. 1; “Other Voices,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 27 October – 2 November 1967.

¹²⁷ James S. Kunen, “There’s an Exterminator in Santa Fe,” *Boston Globe*, 27 July 1969, p. A7. “Letters,” *Open City* (Los Angeles), 23-29 June 1967.

the Leather Aardvark. “We’ve got a new nigger in our society,” Ron told a journalist, “and the way to tell him is by his hair and his beard.” Anti-freak violence was even more inimical in New Mexico. In Taos, hippies clashed with Mexican-Americans, the locals who feared that longhairs intended to take over the town. Thugs beat, stabbed, and castrated hippies, gang-raped a hippie woman, and vandalized hippie homes and free stores. At least one youth was murdered.¹²⁸

The counterculture wrangled and sparred with average Americans, but the police became the hippies’ greatest adversary because they were integral to the Establishment and agents of the State. Freaks regularly compared cops to Nazi Germany’s Gestapo. “When to call the police?” asked the *Berkeley Barb*. “Only in life emergency. If it seems someone will get killed or severely injured if you don’t. Even then it’s a risk.”¹²⁹

Hippies held this perspective because law enforcement raided crashpads, shops, and other countercultural centers looking for runaways, narcotics, obscenity, and housing violations. Police arrested hippies for dope possession and runaways were hauled in. Cops also detained dropouts for minor and trivial offenses such as loitering and jaywalking. One hippie was apprehended for placing a flower on a police car, the officer declaring, “You’re under arrest for tampering with the vehicle!”¹³⁰

Yet these encounters were inconsequential compared to the violence visited upon hippies when lawmen attacked them at their gathering places. On Memorial Day 1967,

¹²⁸ “Is Nothing Sacred?” *Newsweek*, 5 August 1968, 26; “The Great Hippie Hunt,” *Time*, 10 October 1969, 22-23; “Paradise Rocked,” *Time*, 20 June 1969, 55; Kunen, “Exterminator in Santa Fe,” p. A7; George Michaelson, “Hippies Head for the Hills,” *Boston Globe*, 14 December 1969, p. B14.

¹²⁹ Tuli Kupferberg, “How To Think About the Police,” *Berkeley Barb*, 22-28 December 1967.

¹³⁰ Brown, “Condemnation and Persecution of Hippies,” 36; JAS, “Flower Power,” *Berkeley Barb*, 7 April 1967.

cops charged into longhairs with their nightsticks at Tompkins Square Park in New York, beating and arresting 38. Beaten bloody, handcuffed, and dragged away, a man cried, “My God, my God, where is this happening? Is this America?” On the West coast, authorities regularly conducted street sweeps in Berkeley and San Francisco, trapping, clubbing, and arresting longhairs. Police cleared hippies from the Boston Common on a nightly basis during the summer of 1968. On one June evening, 85 cops with nightsticks and dogs chased off 2,000 youth, making 50 arrests. A rock concert in Atlanta erupted into a small riot after a detective pulled his pistol on some hecklers. In early May 1969, police grappled with 1,000 students and hippies, barraging them with exploding pepper gas canisters, breaking up a block party on Mifflin Street in Madison, Wisconsin. Fighting continued over three nights and police made over 100 arrests.¹³¹

Freaks and their allies fought back. In Houston, people tired of police harassment at Allen’s Landing, a public park, formed Democratic Resistance to Police Cruelty. In many cities, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) defended the counterculture, intervening on behalf of youth’s freedom of association, opposing harassment by authorities. Some took direct action against the police. Near the University of Seattle, hip youth formed an organization—“Freedom Patrol”—to monitor local cops. The group, committed to “watching the watchers,” armed with cameras,

¹³¹ Brown, “Condemnation and Persecution of Hippies,” 36-38; Sylvan Fox, “9 Hurt, 38 Arrested as Hippies Clash With Police,” *New York Times*, 31 May 1967, p. 1; William A. Davis, “Police Rout 2000 Off Common,” *Boston Globe*, 30 June 1968, p. 2; “The Great Hippie Hunt,” 22-23; “Madison Police Route 1,000 Students,” *New York Times*, 5 May 1969, p. 26; Barnard L. Collier, “Council in Madison Bars Student Party in Riot-Area Street,” *New York Times*, 10 May 1969, p. 16.

clipboards, and walkie-talkies, documented police activities.¹³²

In addition to “the fuzz,” hippies contended with a justice system that worked against them. In Wyoming, authorities jailed hitchhikers before forcibly shaving their hair off. In Atlanta, a freak was sentenced to 60 days in jail for a minor driving infraction. Other longhairs were incarcerated, placed in solitary confinement, not allowed phone-calls, and held without notification of the charges. Moreover, their captors refused to tell them when they would be released. Judges set exorbitant bail and ordered compulsory haircuts.¹³³

City governments attempted to contain or eradicate the perceived hippie menace. In Massachusetts, the Mayor of Cambridge launched a “war on hippies,” determined to drive them out of the city. In Dallas, the city council passed an ordinance limiting the sidewalk activity of hippie preachers at Stone Place and officials in Aspen, Colorado cracked-down on longhairs, enforcing vagrancy and loitering laws.¹³⁴

The counterculture, however, survived Establishment repression; in fact, the hippies’ numbers continued to multiply as 1969 dawned. As the late sixties grew progressively tumultuous, the young increasingly turned away from politics and political radicalism and embraced the counterculture. *Newsweek*, assessing the mood on the nation’s campuses at the end of the decade reported that “militancy and violence are in

¹³² Thorne Dreyer, “At Love St. Ugly Cops,” *The Rag* (Austin), 21 August 1967; “ACLU,” *Helix* (Seattle), 13 April 1967; “Watching the Watchers,” *Helix* (Seattle), 16 August 1967.

¹³³ Brown, “Condemnation and Persecution of Hippies,” 36-38; “The Great Hippie Hunt,” 22-23.

¹³⁴ “Smoke-In Held at Cambridge,” p. 4; “City Council Lays Down Law on Stone Place,” *Dallas Morning News*, 8 August 1967, p. 1; “Aspen Hippies Sue, Demanding Police Halt ‘Harassment,’” *New York Times*, 18 August 1968, p. 53.

good measure giving way to passivity and personal introspection.”¹³⁵

Multitudes of youth adopted the hippie lifestyle because alienation soared, especially as Richard Nixon moved into the White House. America’s institutions bred alienation and university students believed they required a drastic overhaul. At the end of the decade, a *Newsweek* poll conducted by the Gallup Organization revealed that only eighteen percent of full-time college students gave a favorable rating to the nation’s political parties. Only one third gave organized religion a favorable rating. Less than half approved of high schools, the police, and courts; their positive ratings were 37, 40, and 46 percent respectively.¹³⁶

Although alienation primarily caused the counterculture’s phenomenal growth, other developments fueled its expansion. The Civil Rights movement became increasingly militant as champions of Black Power engaged in violent confrontations with authorities. Black separatists also ousted whites from the movement (SNCC and CORE officially barred whites from membership in 1967). These white outcasts traveled to hippie enclaves in New York, Vermont, and San Francisco. The outlook on the anti-war front appeared hopeless, too, as protest failed to end American involvement in Vietnam decisively and immediately. These circumstances precipitated the shifting of many into the hippie camp. The counterculture mushroomed as it gained defectors from political movements, but it also burgeoned as other youthful rebels—recent college and high

¹³⁵ “The New Mood On Campus,” *Newsweek*, 29 December 1969, 42.

¹³⁶ “New Mood On Campus,” 43.

school graduates—rejected Black Power, feminism, and New Left activism in favor of purely cultural pursuits.¹³⁷

Many hippies believed that the world was entering a fantastic new epoch, the Age of Aquarius. The notion that humankind was on the verge of a new age gained attention in the press. In the March 1969 article “Astrology: Fad and Phenomenon,” *Time* explained that the “movement of the vernal equinox westward at the rate of about 50 seconds a year is bringing it from 2,000 years in the zodiac’s sign of Pisces—characterized by skepticism and disillusionment—to the next 2,000 in Aquarius, an airy sign that will influence the world toward aspiration and faith.” The highly successful Broadway musical *Hair* also celebrated the New Age: “When the moon is in the Seventh House/And Jupiter aligns with Mars/Then peace will guide the planets/And love will steer the stars.”

“This is the dawning of the Age of Aquarius.”¹³⁸

Boosted by the belief that an extraordinary new era was indeed underway, the most ambitious and imaginative hippies ventured to create a whole new society. Many hippies and counterculture hybrids testified to their grand and bold vision of creating a new society, a new civilization, a new world. “We propose that the alienated, the disenchanting and the loving build their own society, within yet a part from the fabric of present society changing it from within by refusing to practice its values, and by love and sharing and peace and creation,” announced *Helix*, a Seattle underground. A yippie,

¹³⁷ Burner, *Making Peace With the 60s*, 68; Gitlin, *The Sixties*, 169; Kupferberg, “The Politics of Love;” Kilian, “All You Need is Love.”

¹³⁸ “Astrology: Fad and Phenomenon,” *Time*, 21 March 1969, 47.

according to Jerry Rubin, was a “longhaired, bearded, crazy motherfucker whose life is theater, every moment creating the new society as he destroys the old.” “We have been cultural outsiders in this civilization,” asserted Peter Berg, a founder of the San Francisco Diggers. “We will become the political dynamic of the new society because we are living a new civilization.” “The sixties saw a revolution among youth The Beatles were part of the revolution,” recalled John Lennon. “We were all on this ship—a ship going to discover the New World. And The Beatles were in the crow’s nest.”¹³⁹

Countercultural activity remained vibrant in the Northeast. Freaks from all over the country descended on Boston Common where they made love, dipped in Frog Pond, and listened to bands like the Ultimate Spinach. Dropouts called Boston “BossTown” and local residents complained of “happenings” that disrupted the Beacon Hill neighborhood.¹⁴⁰

Although not as prevalent as they were on the coasts and in the Midwest, Northwest, and Northeast, hip people gradually appeared in the South. In Dallas, young men dressed like Confederate generals and Dracula and “Mama Cass-looking” women shocked the adults who came to listen to a symphony orchestra at Lee Park. In New Orleans, hundreds gathered at the Mardi Gras Fountain on Sundays for love-ins, while Floridians loved-in in Tampa.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ “A Proposal,” *Helix* (Seattle), 16 August 1967; Rubin, *Do It!*, 82; Berg in Wolf, *Voices From the Love Generation*, 262; The Beatles, *The Beatles Anthology* (San Francisco, 2000), dustjacket.

¹⁴⁰ “Love-In in BossTown,” *Time*, 12 July 1968; “Hippies Get Boston Up Tight,” *Business Week*, 17 May 1969, 142-143.

¹⁴¹ Maryln Schwartz, “Thousands Jam Lee Park For Concert,” *Dallas Morning News*, 15 April 1968, p. 1; *In Arcane Logos* (New Orleans), 3 July 1969; “High Culture in Tampa,” *Aquarian* (Tampa), 31 May 1969.

During the Age of Aquarius, the counterculture spread across the country, taking root in every corner of the nation. Hippies resided in their alternative communities at 115th Street in Cleveland, Old Town in Chicago, Pearl Street in Austin, Plum Street in Detroit, Peachtree Street in Atlanta, West Bank in Minneapolis, and Gas Light Square in St. Louis. Hip areas near universities included Mifflin Street (hippies called it Miffland) in Madison and Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley.

Although many hippies made their home in the cities and on college campuses, just as many left urban areas, heading “back to the land” to establish rural communes. Numerous forces provoked the exodus during and following the Summer of Love. As they had earlier, hippies fled from the war, racism, consumerism, materialism, and the Establishment, in order to do their own thing, but additional factors had emerged by 1967 that drove them to the countryside. First and foremost, the Haight-Ashbury had taken a downward turn. A similar downturn had occurred in the East Village, though not nearly to the same extent. Hippies sought to make a new start and to escape the hassles, paranoia, greed, and dishonesty of the city environment. Second, many communalists had become alienated from radical revolutionaries, professional activists, and demonstrations; they wanted to escape “the movement’s spiritually exhausted preoccupation with perpetual protest” as well as “the power structure” and its “predisposition to exterminate foes and dehumanize friends.” Disillusioned by politics

and politicians and with no end to the war in sight, more and more hippies tried country-living.¹⁴²

Timothy Miller has estimated that from 1960 to 1975, there were thousands—probably tens of thousands—of communes with hundreds of thousands—perhaps one million inhabitants. Commune-building exploded in and after 1967 and it did not subside until the mid-seventies.¹⁴³

In the East, inspired by the behaviorism theories of psychologist B. F. Skinner, communards settled on a 123-acre tobacco farm near Louisa, Virginia, naming the community Twin Oaks after a double oak on the property. Eventually, around 100 members committed to egalitarianism made their home there, sharing food, housing, clothing, and the costs of medical care. A 450-acre rundown farm and big house provided the sight for Cold Mountain Farm near Hobart, New York, where artists, political activists, pacifists, students, poets, and anarchists lived. New England also proved a popular region for commune-building. Bryn Athyn in Vermont was an eclectic collective; at one time it served as a training ground for revolutionary New Leftists, while at other times, psychedelic hippies dominated it. Other well-known intentional communities in this region included Total Loss Farm in Vermont, which Raymond Mungo wrote about in a book of the same name, and Montague Farm in Massachusetts, which Stephen Diamond wrote about in *What the Trees Said*.¹⁴⁴

Communes also flourished in the Southwest. In Taos, New Mexico, a group of

¹⁴² “Letters,” *Avatar* (Boston), 7-20 July 1967; F. P. Salstrem, “A Future in Post-Urban Communal Living,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 1 August 1969.

¹⁴³ Miller, *The 60s Communes*, xviii.

¹⁴⁴ Miller, *The 60s Communes*, 56-63, 86-88.

hippies founded New Buffalo and built adobe buildings for their residences. Soon, dozens of communes popped up within a 25-mile radius of Taos. In 1969, harassed refugees from Morning Star Ranch arrived from California, starting Morning Star East. New York and San Francisco radicals, convinced that fascists were about to take over America and destroy the nation's Leftists, created Reality Construction Company. Other short-lived communes in the area included the Furry Freak Brothers, Kingdom of Heaven, and the Church of the Five Star Ranch. To the North in Southern Colorado, hippies inspired by Drop City founded Libre.¹⁴⁵

Most 1960s era communes were founded in the Northwest. In early 1968, the first refugees from the famous Morning Star Ranch arrived at Bill Wheeler's property—Wheeler's Ranch—in Sonoma County, California. The collective grew to more than 200 members. Nudity was common and the communards came together for Sunday meals, parties, sweat baths, and taking psychedelics. Olompali Ranch, located outside Novato, California, served as a retreat for the Grateful Dead. Self-reliant communards seeking total isolation settled at Black Bear Ranch, while hippies fleeing the Haight set up Table Mountain Ranch on 120-acres in the redwoods of Sonoma County, California. Many countercultural ideas flourished there—peace, love, freedom, nature, spiritual questing, and brotherhood-sisterhood. Other communards established communities in the Northwest in Oregon and Washington.¹⁴⁶

The New Left and counterculture merged completely for one brief moment. It happened in May 1969 in Berkeley, where radicals were hipper and hippies did not run

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 63-65, 78-83.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 53-56, 69-77.

from confrontation. The People's Park incident began when the University of California tore down some houses to make room for a soccer field or dorms. When the university left the lot vacant, hundreds of people—students, hippies, radicals, street people, young professors, and members of the neighborhood—descended on the three acres. They joyously planted vegetables and flowers, enjoyed free food, made music, danced, set up swings and slides, and installed a wading pool. Stew Albert, a Free Speech Movement veteran and member of the Yippies, suggested that people take the three-acres from the university and transform it into “People’s Park.” Even Marxists and other Leftists, who had earlier dismissed the park as a “hippy-dippy” endeavor, fell in love with the idea.¹⁴⁷

Trouble began when Governor Ronald Regan put pressure on Berkeley chancellor Roger Heynes to assert the university’s property rights. Heynes sent police to erect an eight-foot cyclone fence around the park. Students and others decided to take the park back. On May 15—“Bloody Thursday”—Deputy sheriffs fired buckshot and birdshot at the Park’s defenders. Demonstrators opened a fire hydrant, overturned a car, and threw bottles, rocks, and pipes. Over 100 people were injured. “If there has to be a bloodbath,” Governor Ronald Reagan declared, “then let’s get it over with.” Reagan dispatched 3,000 National Guardsmen who took over downtown Berkeley. Women danced topless in front of the Guardsmen and offered them marijuana brownies. On May 21, a helicopter dumped tear gas over the entire campus and 30,000 citizens protested the city’s occupation. At People’s Park, women placed flowers in the rifle

¹⁴⁷ Gitlin, *The Sixties*, 353-356; Stewart Burns, *Social Movements of the 1960s: Searching For Democracy* (Boston, 1990), 96; Rob Kirkpatrick, *1969: The Year Everything Changed* (New York, 2011), 99-100.

barrels of Guardsmen. “For a brief moment in history in People’s Park, the counterculture and political activists had a magical fusion. It was a way of looking at the future. It was utopian. It was a way of saying, ‘If we had control of our lives, this is what it would look like.’”¹⁴⁸

Yet, for the most part, hippies shied away from violent encounters, preaching love and non-violence, while celebrating community throughout 1969. Earlier that April, 4,000 strummed guitars, flew kites, built bonfires, and danced in Sheep Meadow in New York’s Central Park. In August and September, Denver hippies indulged in be-ins.¹⁴⁹

Rock festivals eventually overtook love-ins as the counterculture’s primary gathering event. Between 1967 and 1971—the height of outdoor rock festival era—over three million people attended more than 300 rock festivals. The “year of the festival” was 1969 as more than one million youth trekked to concerts in every region of the country. That summer, hippies attended numerous multi-day shows: the New Orleans, Texas International, Denver, Seattle, Atlanta, and Atlantic City Pop Festivals as well as the Second Annual Sky River and Newport Jazz Festival.¹⁵⁰

The Woodstock Music and Art Fair, billed as “An Aquarian Exposition,” held August 15-17, was the most famous—and greatest—festival ever. Between 400,000 and 500,000 gathered at Max Yasgur’s 600-acre dairy farm in Bethel, New York for “three days of peace and music.” So many tried to get to Woodstock that traffic came to a

¹⁴⁸ Gitlin, *The Sixties*, 356-357; Burns, *Social Movements of the 1960s*, 96; Kirkpatrick, *1969*, 100-102, Reagan quoted on p. 100 and fusion quoted on p. 102.

¹⁴⁹ “Kites, Fists Fly at ‘Love-In, Be-In,’” *New York Times*, 7 April 1969, p. 25; see *Chinook* (Denver), 4 September 1969.

¹⁵⁰ Santelli, *Aquarius Rising*, 2, 87-119.

standstill on every route leading to the grounds. The promoters declared Woodstock a free festival after attendees knocked down all the fences and it became impossible to collect tickets.¹⁵¹

Music emanated from the stage, day and night. The promoters had put together a stellar billing. Among the performers were Canned Heat, Janis Joplin, the Who, Grateful Dead, Creedence Clearwater Revival, the Band, Jefferson Airplane, Sly and the Family Stone, Santana, and Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young. Joe Cocker did a rousing cover of the Beatles song “With A Little Help From My Friends” and in front of a dwindling crowd of 25,000 and garbage-strewn, muddy fields, Jimi Hendrix played a howling, psychedelic version of “The Star Spangled Banner.”¹⁵²

For three days, Woodstock was the third largest city in the state. The crowd stayed high as an estimated 90 percent of the audience smoked marijuana. Two babies were born and two rainstorms poured down over the three days and people splashed and slid in the mud. The Hog Farm commune handed out free food flown in by the Air Force, delivered messages, and tended to people who had taken overdoses or bad acid. The festival was not without problems. Three people died, including one youth who was run over by a tractor as he slept in his sleeping bag. There were mountains of garbage, a lack of food and water, portable toilets overflowed, phone lines came down. Yet there were no rapes, assaults, or robberies. Even the mainstream press pointed out the lack of violence and commended the spectators for pulling together under adverse conditions. “Overrun, strained to its limits, the system somehow, amazingly, didn’t break,” *Life*

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 129-131.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 121-153.

reported. “For three days nearly half a million people lived elbow to elbow in the most exposed, crowded, rain-drenched, uncomfortable kind of community, and there wasn’t so much as a fist fight.”¹⁵³

A countercultural mood pervaded Woodstock, as it was almost entirely devoid of political substance. Attendees mostly ignored the pavilion distributing political literature; salespeople had difficulty selling copies of *New Left Notes*. Abbie Hoffman became involved in an embarrassing incident after he interjected politics into the festival’s laid-back, apolitical atmosphere. As the Who rocked onstage, Hoffman grew agitated. “Oh, man, this is bullshit,” he spouted to Michael Lang, one of Woodstock’s producers. “I mean, we’re headed in the wrong direction again, man. I gotta go up there and make a speech.”

Hoffman was determined to make known the plight of John Sinclair, who had been sentenced to nine years imprisonment for possession of two marijuana joints. During a break in the Who’s performance, Hoffman scampered across the stage and grabbed Pete Townshend’s microphone. “I think this is a pile of shit while John Sinclair rots in prison!” he screamed. An enraged Townshend hit Hoffman with his guitar, knocking him off the stage into the photographer’s pit. The crowd roared its approval. The “Woodstock Nation” wanted little, if anything, to do with political agitation. Abbie swore at Townshend and then he ran away screaming. He did not return to the festival. The Atlanta underground *Great Speckled Bird* lamented that this “absolutely chilling

¹⁵³ Santelli, *Aquarius Rising*, 121-153; “The Big Woodstock Rock Trip,” *Life*, 29 August 1969, 14B, 20; “Drugs and Mud Plague 300,000 at N. Y. Music Fair,” *Los Angeles Times*, 17 August 1969, p. 1; “The Message of History’s Biggest Happening,” *Time*, 29 August 1969.

scene,” calling the “split” between politics and culture, politicians and hippies, “ugly,” and “self-defeating.”¹⁵⁴

Woodstock was, and remains, the supreme moment in the history of the counterculture. For many hippies, it represented the high point of the entire hippie phenomenon; the *Seed* called it “the definitive gathering of the tribes; a massive pilgrimage to an electrified holy land.” Those in attendance felt part of a peaceful community, loving one another, sharing with one another, working together. For three halcyon days, the young smoked dope, made love, dug sublime sounds, skinny-dipped in Filippini’s Pond, and immersed themselves in their ideal society. Freaks had difficulty describing their experience. “It is nearly impossible to put into words what has happened here at White Lake,” wrote one participant. “For the first time I feel free and we are really together. It is so peaceful and loving here that I (and many, many others) don’t want to leave.”¹⁵⁵

Woodstock encouraged the idea that America was on the cusp of a cultural revolution. “How can I come back and do the old things?” wrote John Hilgerdt in the *East Village Other*. “This is how we should live. Can we?” Timothy Leary felt the most heartened and optimistic. “Woodstock is the great example of how it is going to be in the future,” he wrote to John Sinclair. “We have the numbers. The loving and the peaceful are the majority. The violent and the authoritarian are the minority. We are

¹⁵⁴ Frank, *Conquest of Cool*, 246n.21; Robert Stephen Spitz, *Barefoot in Babylon: The Creation of the Woodstock Music Festival, 1969* (New York, 1979), 463; Miller Francis, Jr., “Woodstock,” *Great Speckled Bird* (Atlanta), 1 September 1969.

¹⁵⁵ “Electric Mud,” *The Seed* (Chicago), Vol. 4, No. 4 (1969); John Hilgerdt, “That Aquarian Exposition,” *East Village Other* (New York), 20 August 1969.

winning. And soon.”¹⁵⁶

Not everyone on the Left, however, was pleased with Woodstock and the pacifistic hippie worldview. Committed revolutionaries still held dropouts in contempt. For promoters of political revolution, there could be no personal revolutions or transformations as long as the System oppressed the individual. Turning on and dropping out did not constitute a real revolution. Marxism was not irrelevant ideology, nor was Marx himself an “outdated old nineteenth-century cat” as some hippies argued. Revolutionaries believed that the oppressed needed to seize power in order to achieve self-determination. Retreating into the dope and hip scenes would not stop the Establishment from tyrannizing blacks, busting young rebels at home, and napalming Vietnamese overseas. In addition, radical politicians condemned rock capitalism, arguing that hippie rock stars and music corporations enriched themselves by exploiting hip culture and ripping kids off. Jim Shoch, a member of a Marxist-Leninist group at Stanford, recalled how he felt about hippiedom: “I certainly smoked a lot of dope; that part I had no trouble with . . . [But] I was never a hippie. You couldn’t be a hippie in the Revolutionary Union We thought it was totally apolitical.”¹⁵⁷

The SDS leadership held these perspectives. In June, SDS had convened for its national convention in Chicago where it splintered into three warring factions—Progressive Labor, Revolutionary Youth Movement II, and Weathermen. Each claimed to be the vanguard of the revolution. The Weathermen took their name

¹⁵⁶ Hilgerdt, “That Aquarian Exposition,” Letter, 9 December 1969, from Timothy Leary to John Sinclair, John and Leni Sinclair Papers, Box 3, Folder 7, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

¹⁵⁷ Kilian, “All You Need is Love,” Klatch, *A Generation Divided*, 144.

from the Bob Dylan lyric, “You don’t need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows.” They strived to do away with their “white-skin privilege,” and wanted to assist Third World revolutionaries in overthrowing American imperialism. Calling for “armed struggle,” a few hundred Weathermen determined to “bring the war home,” fought with police and destroyed businesses and cars on the streets of Chicago during the “Days of Rage” in early October. As their passion for revolution increased, the Woodstock Festival became one of their targets. “Fuck hippie capitalism. Build culture in struggle,” announced the Weathermen. “Events like the Woodstock gentleness freakout,” they continued, “indicate that as long as militancy isn’t a threat, pig and ruling class approval is forthcoming.” As the decade drew to a close, then, political revolutionaries and hippie purists had not reconciled their differences.¹⁵⁸

The New Left and counterculture, however, continued to merge at massive anti-war demonstrations. SDS disintegrated at the same moment the anti-war movement hit its apex. President Richard Nixon inadvertently rejuvenated the anti-war movement when it became apparent that he had no intention of bringing the troops home quickly. The war seemed like it would go on interminably, and as a result, the movement broadened significantly and gained greater legitimacy. On October 15, more than a million people nationwide, including hippies, participated in the Vietnam Moratorium Day. Vigils and demonstrations occurred in hundreds of communities across the country.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁸ Weathermen quoted in Nancy Zaroulis and Gerald Sullivan, *Who Spoke Up?: American Protest Against the War in Vietnam, 1963-1975* (Garden City, NY, 1984), 261.

¹⁵⁹ Isserman and Kazin, *America Divided*, 276.

A month later, on November 15, between 600,000 and 750,000 protesters assembled and marched in Washington for Mobilization Day. Approximately 250,000 demonstrated in San Francisco. Again, hippies participated in the anti-war movement with a diverse if uneasy coalition of the elderly, women for peace, students, anti-war veterans, blacks, politicians, trade unionists, doctors, lawyers, and working-class people. Mobilization Day in Washington, for Tom Hayden, was “the Moratorium and Woodstock.” Veteran activist Louise Peck had never experienced anything like it before: “A very beautiful feeling . . . such a sense of community in that crowd . . . even alone, everyone you met was like a friend.” “The city bloomed over night,” observed an Illinois underground, *News From Nowhere*. “Long hair, blue jeans, freaks all over: our culture had arrived.” William Hanley, who had been in charge of Woodstock’s staging and sound, erected the Mobilization’s stage, towers, scaffolding, and sound equipment with the help of the Hog Farm commune. Folk singer Arlo Guthrie and four separate casts of the hippie musical *Hair* participated in the Rally. And at one point the audience joined hands and sang John Lennon’s “Give Peace a Chance.”¹⁶⁰

The counterculture remained ebullient going into the last major concert of the year—Altamont—held on December 6 near Livermore, California. The Rolling Stones had decided to give a free concert on their American tour and Altamont Speedway, a racetrack, provided the venue. The Stones hired the notorious Hell’s Angel’s motorcycle club to handle security and the bikers received \$500 worth of beer for their

¹⁶⁰ Morgan, *60s Experience*, 162-163; Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, 753; Peter Briggs, “Moratorium: Washington,” *News From Nowhere* (Dekalb, Illinois), December 1969; Zaroulis and Sullivan, *Who Spoke Up?*, 289-290.

services. The concert was hastily planned as the Stones put Altamont together in less than 24 hours.¹⁶¹

The violence began at mid-day during Santana's set and continued into the afternoon when Jefferson Airplane performed. The Angels, loaded on beer and acid-spiked wine, punched and kicked spectators and beat them with chains, clubs, and sawed-off pool-cues. First-aid tents overflowed with the injured and an estimated 780 people had taken bumper LSD trips. During the Airplane's show, singer Marty Balin jumped into the audience, trying to prevent the further beating of a fan. An Angel promptly knocked him out cold. Balin was the only individual to stand up to the bikers all day.¹⁶²

The crowd had waited for nearly ten hours by the time the Rolling Stones took the stage. Violence erupted again and again as pool-cue and chain-wielding Angels continued to beat hippies and throw and kick people off the stage. Singer Mick Jagger stopped the band several times to address the audience of 300,000 sitting or standing in the dark: "Why are we fighting? Brothers and sisters, why are we fighting?" As the band finished "Under My Thumb," commotion ensued. An eighteen-year-old African-American man from Berkeley, Meredith Hunter, brandished a handgun. An Angel plunged a switchblade into his back repeatedly—four or five times; other bikers joined the assault on Hunter, kicking and punching him. He died later that evening. The Stones, not entirely aware of what had happened, played into the night. Others died as well. A car plowed into two campers, killing them instantly, and another man drowned

¹⁶¹ Santelli, *Aquarius Rising*, 170.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 172-178.

in an irrigation canal.¹⁶³

Counterculturalists reacted in mixed ways to Altamont. “Pearl Harbor To the Woodstock Nation,” announced one headline and The *Berkeley Tribe* declared, “Stones Concert Ends: Amerika Up for Grabs.” Most who had attended noted that the vibrations were generally bad throughout the day: “There was no love, no joy. It wasn’t just the Angels. It was everybody. In 24 hours we created all the problems of our society in one place: congestion, violence, dehumanization.” Mick Jagger was one of the most distraught and disturbed. “I thought the scene here was supposed to be so groovy,” he said bitterly. “If Jesus Christ had been there, he would’ve been fucking crucified.”¹⁶⁴

Yet some expressed less disturbed and pessimistic opinions. One writer pointed out that because the violence had occurred near the stage, the people farther back in the audience had actually enjoyed themselves. Timothy Leary dismissed the concert’s problems, opining that the majority of those in attendance—99 percent—were loving and peaceful, and they had vastly outnumbered the less than 50 violent individuals. And at least one underground journalist assailed the media, while defending the counterculture. “The incident is being blown out of proportion,” wrote Clay Geerdes. “Violence and money are news. Must they be? . . . Is there no way to counteract those who continue to project violence into every move that young people make toward the achievement of an alternative life pattern?” Despite these reactions, the Altamont

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 155-161, 178-182.

¹⁶⁴ Jonathan Eisen, ed., *Altamont: Death of Innocence in the Woodstock Nation* (New York, 1970), 215; Jagger quoted in Stephen Davis, *Old Gods Almost Dead: The 40-Year Odyssey of the Rolling Stones* (New York, 2001), 323, 324.

debacle shocked, saddened, and disgusted most hippies.¹⁶⁵

Altamont was not the only disconcerting news story that December. Earlier that year, on the morning of August 9, police had found the brutally butchered bodies of actress Sharon Tate and three of her friends, including the coffee fortune heiress Abigail Folger in Benedict Canyon, Los Angeles. The next evening, two more bodies were discovered, that of Leno and Rosemary LaBianca. Now, four months later, police had apprehended their suspects: Charles Manson and members of “The Family.”

The mainstream press wasted no time linking Manson with the counterculture. The message was clear: hippies could be gun-toting, knife-wielding killers. *Time* published an article, “The Demon of Death Valley,” that told of a “mystical semi-religious hippie drug-and-murder cult led by a bearded, demonic Mahdi.” In another story entitled “Hippies and Violence,” *Time* quoted a doctor who confirmed the fears of many in majority society: “There has always been a potential for murder. Many hippies are socially almost dead inside. Some require massive emotions to feel anything at all. They need bizarre, intensive acts to feel alive—sexual acts, acts of violence, nudity, every kind of Dionysian thrill.”¹⁶⁶

During Manson’s trial, the details of his life and the circumstances behind the murders became clear. Charles Manson was born on November 12, 1934 to a teenage prostitute in Cincinnati and an aunt and uncle raised him until age eleven in Charleston, West Virginia. Manson spent the next years in and out of juvenile schools and prisons

¹⁶⁵ Eisen, ed., *Altamont*, 239; Miller, *Hippies and American Values*, 84; Clay Geerdes, “Stones’ Satisfaction,” *Kaleidoscope* (Milwaukee), 19 December 1969 – 2 January 1970.

¹⁶⁶ “The Demon of Death Valley,” *Time*, 12 December 1969, 22, 25; “Hippies and Violence,” *Time*, 12 December 1969, 25.

for burglary, car theft, and cashing stolen U. S. Treasury checks. Upon his release from prison in March 1967, he traveled to the Haight-Ashbury wearing beads and sandals and began collecting a harem of impressionable young women. Then he and his “family” moved to the Spahn Ranch in Western Los Angeles County where they spent the days singing Manson’s songs, dancing, taking drugs, swimming, stealing cars, and raiding garbage, searching for food. Manson’s followers called him “God.” Manson had ordered the killings in order to instigate a race war between blacks and whites, a war he called “Helter Skelter,” after the Beatles’ White Album song. He hoped that the white Establishment would blame “Blackie” for the murders, igniting an apocalyptic racial conflict in which African-Americans would emerge victorious. Then, Manson thought, he and his family, the lone white survivors, would come out from a bottomless pit in the desert to lord-over and command the black population as “the black man’s sole purpose on earth was to serve the white man.” These were the twisted fantasies of a madman, not a peace-loving hippie.¹⁶⁷

Manson, on the surface, appeared to be a hippie—he played guitar, enjoyed sex and orgies, took drugs, and had long hair—but all commonalities between him and the counterculture end there. Manson did not consider himself a hippie—he loathed the very name because he associated the flower people with “pacifism” and “weakness.” Manson, in fact, was the antithesis of a hippie: he was a racist who vehemently hated African-Americans; he embraced death and violence, persuading his followers to

¹⁶⁷ Paul O’Neil, “The Wreck of a Monstrous Family,” *Life*, 19 December 1969, 20-31; “Demon of Death Valley,” 22; Vincent Bugliosi with Curt Gentry, *Helter Skelter: The True Story of the Manson Murders* (New York, 1994), 294, 303, 330.

commit murder; he hoped to ignite a race war; and he believed in a white “master race.” Manson felt that “Hitler was a tuned-in guy who had leveled the karma of the Jews.”¹⁶⁸

But members of the older generation did not know the truth about Manson. Innocent longhairs were horrified by Manson and his murderous followers, yet they received the fallout for the Family’s actions, especially in Los Angeles. “Did you have anything to do with the murders?” a store clerk asked a bearded man, only half-jokingly. A scared resident confronted and chased off with a shotgun a hippie couple out for a walk. “I can just see my mother reading the stories and saying, ‘Oh, so that’s the kind of life she’s been living,’” a woman told a journalist. “They just confirm what everyone wants to believe.” Some adults came to hippies’ defense. “The true hippie wouldn’t hurt a flea,” remarked a restaurant owner who employed longhairs.¹⁶⁹

Scholars argue that the counterculture had an ephemeral existence, lasting four or five years. The most common interpretation maintains that the peaceful Woodstock festival represented the high tide of hippiedom followed by its downfall at the Altamont concert four months later. Charles Manson, it is said, demonstrated the dark potential of communal living and the hippie lifestyle. Historian William L. O’Neill, for example, has argued that Manson adhered to typical hippie values because he felt “straight virtues were bad” and “free love, nature, dope, rock, and mysticism were good.” The historian concluded, “Of course hippies were not murderers usually. But the repressed hostility, authoritarianism, perversity, and mindless paranoia that underlay much of the hippie

¹⁶⁸ Vincent Bugliosi with Curt Gentry, *Helter Skelter*, 298, 302, 316

¹⁶⁹ Quotes in Steven V. Roberts, “The Hippie Mystique,” *New York Times*, 15 December 1969, p. 1.

ethic were never displayed more clearly.” According to most historians, the counterculture did not survive the 1960s or faded shortly thereafter.¹⁷⁰

To be sure, Altamont and the Manson murders were terrible events. But they did not represent or signify the downfall of hippiedom, the end of the spirit of peace and love, a generation’s lost faith, or the end of the sixties era. Most hippies did not consider Manson one of their own and most did not attend Altamont. In fact, Altamont quickly faded from memory when hip youth enjoyed successful, multi-day rock festivals in the next decade.

When the seventies dawned, the quintessential counterculture with its love-ins and flower power and acid rock had passed into history. Although freaks would rarely mention the coming of the “Age of Aquarius” in the seventies, they did speak of, and had great faith in, the new society, the new age, and the new America they attempted to usher in. The counterculture had yet to reach its apogee.

¹⁷⁰ O’Neill, *Coming Apart*, 263-264; See also Miller, *Hippies and American Values*; Fisher, *America in White, Black, and Gray*; David Steigerwald, *The Sixties and the End of Modern America* (New York, 1995); McWilliams, *The 60s Cultural Revolution* (Westport, CT, 2000); Morgan, *The 60s Experience*; Hodgson, *America In Our Time*; Farber, *Age of Great Dreams*; Matusow, *The Unraveling of America*; Chalmers, *And the Crooked Places Made Straight*.

CHAPTER V

**THE EMERGENCE OF THE DISSIDENT YOUTH CULTURE AND
COUNTERSOCIETY, ITS APOGEE AND DECLINE, 1970-1973**

“To change the world completely is all we want.”—*Cahoots*, Joplin, Missouri¹

In 1971, *Time* proclaimed, “Too many hippies. We can only afford so many people alienated from society.” Two years later, the counterculture had declined precipitously; many newspapers and magazines discussed hippies in the past tense as their numbers dwindled. In an article about San Francisco’s Haight-Ashbury entitled, “Six Blocks In Search of a New Identity,” the *New York Times* reported, “The kids who make for The Haight now are the scavengers, arriving after the ‘gold’ has been panned out to scrape up whatever bits of love, peace and understanding have been left behind.”²

In the early seventies, the counterculture thrived. It had undergone a drastic transformation since its inception, hardly resembling the counterculture of 1968, even less so, the counterculture of 1965. Gone were Edwardian suits, frills, cravats, lace, and exaggerated lapels, psychedelic sounds, pulsating liquid light shows, happenings, Flower Power, body paint, and the conviction that LSD could transform the world. Gone, too, were the distinct philosophies that characterized—and divided—hippies and activists. Freaks no longer grooved at love-ins; they jetted into Amsterdam, hitchhiked America,

¹ *Cahoots* (Joplin, MO), June 1971.

² Timothy Tyler, “The Cooling of America: Out of Tune and Lost in the Counterculture,” *Time*, 22 February 1971, 15; Andrew Radolf, “Haight Street: Six Blocks in Search of a New Identity,” *New York Times*, 22 April 1973, p. 3.

backpacked and camped in secluded wildernesses, consumed organic food, farmed in Tennessee, opened hip clothing stores and co-ops, converted to vegetarianism, removed refuse from creeks, and joined tenant's unions.

The counterculture reached its apogee in 1971—and by 1973, it was almost gone. After the tragic killing of four students at Kent State, nearly all of the lines dividing the New Left and hippies faded and blurred as young people—demonstrators, radical politicians, communards, Jesus Freaks, dropouts, drifters, runaways, hippies, yippies, zippies, veterans, homosexuals, cultural feminists, and environmentalists—became a common, integrated, dissident youth culture and counterculture dedicated to creating the new America, while standing against the Vietnam War, Richard Nixon, Silent Majority, and the Establishment.

Meanwhile, freaks appeared all over, from Idaho to Oklahoma to South Dakota to Kentucky. Cultural activism exploded and alternative institution building peaked in 1971 as hippies and political activists came together, establishing co-ops, businesses, free clinics, free stores, free universities, legal services, and community switchboards. By 1973, the counterculture waned as the result of the end of the Vietnam War and the draft, its absorption into consumer culture, oil embargos, and a crippling economic downturn.

As the seventies began, the counterculture discovered a new cause for its efforts: environmentalism. Environmentalists had been active earlier, but it was not until the 1960s that the modern environmental movement gained momentum. In 1962, Rachel Carson published her influential *Silent Spring*. Marine biologist Carson pointed out the

dangers inherent in agribusiness' use of pesticides like DDT. Toxic chemicals, she elucidated, found their way into human fat, breast milk, and water. Pesticides also built up in the food chain, killing birds, and other creatures, and they also threatened people. Carson advanced an ecological outlook, arguing that people and nature were interconnected and that humans needed to cease engaging in activities that harmed ecological systems. A public debate about pesticides that Carson had helped to instigate continued throughout the 1960s. The twelve most toxic substances she had listed in the book were eventually banned or restricted.³

Ecological disasters alerted the public to environmental problems. Some wildlife disappeared; Louisiana's state bird, the brown pelican, no longer inhabited the state's shores. Noise pollution harassed cities; jet, subway train, and truck sounds exceeding 85-decibels threatened to damage hearing. And pollution plagued the nation's waters, too. Human waste, industrial discharge, soap, and fertilizer, flowed into lakes and rivers. In 1965, a study showed that only one river in the entire country, the Saint Croix between Wisconsin and Minnesota, remained unpolluted. In January 1969, an oil well caught fire and exploded off of Santa Barbara, sending 235,000 gallons of petroleum into the Pacific Ocean, and a slick gradually spread over 200 miles of coastline. So much oil and chemical pollution flowed into Cleveland's Cuyahoga River that it caught fire several times and burned two railroad trestles. Meanwhile, companies and municipalities polluted Lake Erie with chlorides and sulfates. Authorities warned that the lake was "almost dead." Most life forms no longer dwelled in its waters, except for

³ Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, 725; Lytle, *America's Uncivil Wars*, 58; John McCormick, *Reclaiming Paradise: The Global Environmental Movement* (Bloomington, IN, 1989), 56.

sludge worms and mutated carp. Air pollution also concerned citizens. Automobiles produced 95 million tons of air waste per year and harmful smog floated over the nation's cities, especially Los Angeles. Smog's deleterious effects included crippled livestock, discolored house and car paint, dead pine trees, and human respiratory ailments.⁴

Environmentalism became a popular aim and conviction on college campuses in 1969. The hippies and New Leftists who had struggled to maintain control of People's Park in Berkeley were part of the burgeoning ecology movement. "The People's Park and all parks like it," declared Active Conservation Tactics, "are part of the attempt by people to beautify, save, or newly create even the smallest portion of our dehumanized land." In November 1969, the *New York Times* reported, "Environment May Eclipse Vietnam as College Issue." After the massive anti-war marches that fall, the paper noted that Vietnam seemed "physically remote," and that many students felt that the war issue offered a "limited scope for student action." Alienated activists seized on environmentalism as a new cause. "A lot of people are becoming disenchanted with the anti-war movement," observed a young man at Boston University. "People who are frustrated and disillusioned are starting to turn to ecology."⁵

Like war and racism, youth saw the degradation of the environment as another symptom of a sick Establishment. Activists perceived environmentalism and the war as intertwined. Vietnam's critics saw the war as a huge ecological disaster. Students

⁴ "The Ravaged Environment," *Newsweek*, 26 January 1970, 31-40; Lytle, *America's Uncivil Wars*, 326; Anderson, *Movement and the Sixties*, 347; Kirk, *Counterculture Green*, 93.

⁵ Bulletin, Active Conservation Tactics, Social Protest Collection, BANC MSS 86/157 c; BANC FILM 2757, Reel 88, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley; Gladwin Hill, "Environment May Eclipse Vietnam as College Issue," *New York Times*, 30 November 1969, pp. 1, 51.

demonstrated against Dow Chemical, a company that made napalm, a jellied gasoline that killed Vietnamese civilians. Herbicides such as Agent Orange not only burned away jungle canopy, vegetation, and crops, but also proved harmful to American troops who came into contact with it or handled it.⁶

The number of people involved in the environmental movement soared. In 1960, 124,000 people claimed membership in the top twelve environmental groups; by 1972, that number had climbed almost ten times to over 1.1 million. Membership jumped 38 percent between 1969 and 1972 when 300,000 new environmentalists joined organizations. In a January 1970 article entitled “The Ravaged Environment,” *Newsweek* declared, “the general public has been seized with such anger and alarm as to goad political leaders into proclaiming conservation of the environment the chief task of this decade—and perhaps of the rest of the century.”⁷

Earth Day—the largest demonstration of the sixties era—clearly indicated that the degradation of the environment worried Americans. On April 22, 1970, an estimated twenty million people and 4,000 ecology groups celebrated the first Earth Day. Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson had suggested the idea, recommending a teach-in on the dangers of pollution. Denis Hayes, a Harvard Law student, acted as national coordinator. Teachers and students participated in ecological happenings and teach-ins at 1,500 colleges and 10,000 high schools. Police closed in Fifth Avenue in New York, allowing 100,000 people to parade up and down the street. In Washington, 10,000

⁶ McCormick, *Reclaiming Paradise*, 64; Lytle, *America's Uncivil Wars*, 328-329.

⁷ Robert Cameron Mitchell, “From Conservation to Environmental Movement: The Development of the Modern Environmental Lobbies,” in *Government and Environmental Politics: Essays on Historical Developments Since World War Two*, ed. Michael J. Lacey (Baltimore, 1989), 97; “The Ravaged Environment,” 31.

people reveled around the Washington Monument for twelve hours. From Boston to Sacramento, schoolchildren walked along roads and vacant lots picking up discarded tires and beer and soda cans. At the University of Wisconsin, one could attend 58 different environmental programs. At Florida Technological University, students put a car on trial for polluting the air before they attempted to destroy it. At least 1,000 Cleveland State University students collected litter around the city, while 1,200 students in Letcher County Kentucky in Appalachia symbolically interred a casket filled with garbage. President Nixon did not partake in the day's activities, but an aide relayed his approval. Businesses responded by announcing new environmentally friendly programs and products.⁸

“Earth Day may be a turning point in American history,” Senator Nelson announced in front of a crowd of 4,000 in Denver. “It may be the birth date of a new American ethic that rejects the frontier philosophy that the continent was put here for our plunder, and accepts the idea that even urbanized, affluent, mobile societies are interdependent with the fragile, life-sustaining systems of the air, the water, the land.” Hippies praised Earth Day, too. *The Free Press of Louisville* called it “a groovy spring thing” and a “real funk festival,” while acknowledging, “the message was pretty heavy”: the “Earth is dying.”⁹

Environmentalists, environmentalism, and Earth Day became targets for movement radicals and New Leftists who found Earth Day “trivial” and a “diversion”

⁸ “A Memento Mori to the Earth,” *Time*, 4 May 1970, 16.

⁹ “A Memento to the Earth,” 16; Chuck Worth, “Earth Rap,” *Free Press of Louisville*, 14 May 1970.

from more important and crucial developments—the war, racism, imperialism, poverty, and police repression. Some politicians suggested that the Nixon administration created enthusiasm for environmentalism in order to split the movement into internecine factions. Radicals cited as evidence Establishment participation and approval, especially among mainstream politicians and members of Nixon’s cabinet. New Leftists also saw environmentalism as a moderate phenomenon concerned with lifestyle issues rather than the egregious effects of capitalism.¹⁰

The counterculture and New Left never merged entirely. Some politicians remained hostile toward those who turned their energies away from the war. Political radicals perceived hippies dwelling in rural communes as “escapists” hiding from pressing issues and real problems. And some self-described revolutionaries felt as much disdain for hippie purists as they did for the Establishment. “These people whose perverse idea [it] is to remain uninvolved and apathetic,” a Kentucky underground contended, “are to be blamed for the shameful condition this country is in as much as the Fascist oppressors.” Other politicians blamed purists for their enervating effects on political movements. In late summer 1970, for example, the People’s Army Jamboree marched on the city of Portland, but, according to one of the participants, its strength “had been greatly diminished, or rather siphoned off, by two simultaneous rock

¹⁰ Uncle Rollo, “Earth Day—A Diversion Developed By Our Leaders?” *Free Press of Louisville*, 14 May 1970; Kirkpatrick Sale, *The Green Revolution: The American Environmental Movement, 1962-1992* (New York, 1993), 25; Lytle, *America’s Uncivil Wars*, 331.

festivals.” The People’s Army only consisted of 1,500 “dedicated revolutionaries,” a militant lamented, because “the peaceniks and flower children” had defected.¹¹

Some hippie purists also endured. They refused to participate in demonstrations and worked at building the new society in secluded rural communes. And purists continued to vehemently oppose violent radicals. “Here I am, your past follower in the virtues of ‘Peace’ and ‘Love,’ wanting only to smoke my pot and exchange caresses with my girlfriend; and you persons have taken to writing of guns and grenades,” a hippie wrote to Houston’s *Space City!* “Whatever happened to the old values?” Purists opposed violent political revolution as a viable avenue for change, advocating cultural revolution or ill-defined rock revolution in its place. “I confess, by the way, that my most subversive, ‘violent-overthrow’ thought is to build a huge, towering and terrifying amplification system . . . and hook in Jefferson Airplane during the dead of night,” admitted a hippie. “Then, I’d hammer and rock the city right into the river—not angrily, but happily, to be sure.”¹²

Purists and revolutionaries disliked President Nixon. His Vietnam policy infuriated students, the anti-war movement, and hippies. Nixon planned to withdraw American troops gradually. He also intended to renew bombing, go head-to-head with Hanoi in negotiations, and shift responsibility for South Vietnam’s security to Vietnamese combat soldiers—“Vietnamization.”

¹¹ Booklet, *Journal of a Walden Two Commune: The Collected Leaves of Twin Oaks Vol. 1* (Yellow Springs, OH, 1972), 39, David L. Rice Library, University of Southern Indiana, Evansville; Uncle Rollo, “Earth Day;” Leslie Zador, “Rock Festivals Drain Strength,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 11-17 September 1970.

¹² “Filigree Seduced,” *Space City!* (Houston), 19 September – 3 October 1970; “Drug Abuse,” *Free Press of Louisville*, 14-21 September 1970.

Nixon also had plans for Cambodia. A year earlier, American troops had made a secret incursion into Cambodia to sabotage communist supply routes. In April 1970, Nixon ordered bombing and troop raids of the neutral country in an attempt to destroy Communist supply depots and sanctuaries.

Youth felt betrayed. Nixon had promised to “wind down” the war—then, suddenly, he expanded it into Cambodia. Protest erupted: hundreds of thousands of students at over 700 colleges demonstrated. A national strike unfolded on a wide range of campuses, from hotbeds of activism in Berkeley and Madison to religious schools, community colleges, and southern institutions where little protest activity had existed previously. At two universities, demonstrations turned deadly. At Kent State in Ohio, the governor called out the National Guard after rioters firebombed an ROTC building. On May 4, troops opened fire on students, killing four—two men and two women—and wounding eleven others. Tragedy struck again the following week when state police killed two African-Americans at Jackson State in Mississippi. The week after Kent State, four million students contributed to demonstrations that engulfed over 50 percent of the nation’s campuses. Some 100,000 marched on the White House. Sixteen states activated the National Guard to quell rioting on twenty campuses and police and students clashed at over twenty universities. 500 campuses closed down, and 51 did not reopen that semester.¹³

Nixon showed no sympathy for the slain students; rather, he announced to the shocked country, “when dissent turns to violence it invites tragedy.” The “Silent

¹³ Anderson, *Movement and the Sixties*, 349-351; Isserman and Kazin, *America Divided*, 278; Zaroulis and Sullivan, *Who Spoke Up?*, 320.

Majority” also showed little sympathy. The country was profoundly divided. Polls indicated that a majority supported Nixon’s invasion of Cambodia and blamed the students for the shooting rather than the Guard. In Kent, Ohio there were “few regrets expressed by the townspeople over the deaths of the four students, and those few are usually prefaces to baffled outrage over the smashing of store windows, the burning of the Army R.O.T.C. building and the prevalence of long hair.” In the days after the tragedy, townspeople wrote to local newspapers to express their anger. One suggested “a very simple compound with barbed wire and a minimum of conveniences” to put an end to student unrest. Few people in Kent and the neighboring communities blamed the Guardsmen; many adults felt that the soldiers “should have shot more of them.” Some even voiced their contempt for the dead. “They were dirty and they had long hair,” an older woman commented. “The newspapers printed their high school pictures so people would think they were nice kids, but they weren’t.”¹⁴

In the early seventies, the hippies and the New Left, for the most part, merged into a collective dissident youth culture and countersociety united in opposition to Nixon, Vietnam, Silent Majority, and the Establishment.

Kent State set this process in motion, helping to obliterate the divisions distinguishing the two strains of rebellion. For youth, Kent State was a “massacre” and “slaughter” and signaled the Establishment’s “declaration of war” on the anti-war movement and kids generally. “William Schroeder, Allison Krause, Jeffrey Miller, Sandy Scheuer. Four brothers and sisters were murdered by the Ohio National Guard,”

¹⁴ Nixon quoted in Lytle, *America’s Uncivil Wars*, 355; John Kifner, “Regrets Are Few in Kent, Ohio,” *New York Times*, 13 June 1970, p. 23.

wrote *Liberation News Service's* Jeff Gerth. "Their murder had all the efficiency of a cold blooded killing." In this polarized atmosphere it had become Us versus Them. Left versus Right. Hippies versus Straights. The peaceful versus the bellicose and intolerant. In the aftermath of Kent, few hippie purists raised objections to demonstrators and politicians, and activists generally refrained from criticizing hippies. Young people began to think of themselves as a "counterculture," a "tribe," and "a people." They commonly used phrases like "our society" and "our nation." Some conceived of and discussed an expansive counterculture composed of disparate individuals opposed to the Establishment—black snipers, dopers, peace marchers, student radicals, and draft resisters. Likewise, the Revolutionary People's Constitutional Convention which met in Philadelphia in September proclaimed its dedication to empowering "the people": women, Third World individuals, G.I.s, college students, workers, lesbians, gays, welfare recipients, and hippies. Of course, the counterculture was never as all-embracing as some people believed; nevertheless, youth sensed a certain cohesion and solidarity among one another when they faced down the Establishment. The *Madison Kaleidoscope* articulated lucidly the pervasive feeling held by radicals of all persuasions—including hip Marxists—that they were part of a common and inclusive youth culture pitted against the mainstream and majority society:

The youth culture is spreading like a plague over diseased Amerika, killing capitalist minds and stealing a whole generation away from their parents. The kids exult in their dropping out of PIG culture by growing their hair long, blowing the capitalist smog out of their minds with illegal drugs, living Woodstock, and, by committing the ultimate anti-social act—having fun. Kids from Boise, New York, and Berkeley live on

communes, smoke dope, fuck, create, and because they are the country's most wanted criminals, must fight pigs together.¹⁵

And fight together they did. Hippies and politicians put aside their differences, for their shared opposition to the war and Nixon proved more important than their opposing approaches to social change. Dope dealers and political heavies, for example, hung out at a local bar in Lawrence at the University of Kansas. Both groups vocally sparred over who had more influence on students. After Nixon's escalation of the war into Cambodia, however, the two groups came together, organizing the university's most militant protests.¹⁶

Most youth believed that the new society would come about when the young worked together. "Alternatives to the American culture are being found and experimented with as a new culture, a new society is being built. We cannot define the new culture, we can only work it out as we live it. It will involve struggle; continuous, collective struggle," asserted the Joplin, Missouri underground, *Cahoots*. Most of the new society builders no longer made distinctions between political and cultural radicalism. Contributors to the underground *Cahoots!* made clear that the paper would

¹⁵ Jeff Gerth, "Slaughter At Kent State," *Omaha Kaleidoscope*, Vol. 1, No. 6 (1970); Rock critic quoted in Doggett, *There's A Riot Going On*, 358; Dennis Junot, "Peace Picnic," *Free Press of Louisville*, 14 May 1970; "Food co-op," *Big Muddy Gazette* (Carbondale, IL), 1970; Pat Boyle, "Cultural Revolution Rooted in Depression," *Liberator* (Morgantown, WV), February 1970; Donald Freed, "Huey Newton—The People Must Burn the Pig Constitution," *Los Angeles Free Press*, 11-17 September 1970; "Youth Culture," *Madison Kaleidoscope*, 5 May 1970.

¹⁶ Farber, "The Counterculture and the Antiwar Movement," in Small and Hoover, eds., *Give Peace a Chance*, 14-15.

report on music, art, lifestyles, and the war in Vietnam, “for there is no separation between culture and politics.”¹⁷

More and more youth combined political and cultural radicalism—few perceived a barrier between the two. Activists and hippies alike turned inward and strived for personal awakenings and self-realization. Riot, demonstration, and strike participants determined to “make the revolution,” also struggled “intensely on a personal level.” Values such as love became universal among the politicians and hip. In Berkeley, for example, a member of the Youth Coalition for Self-Defense made reference to getting high “on the love which sustains our politics.”¹⁸

Throughout the sixties, the counterculture and New Left, despite some converging and overlapping, had remained distinct camps. Hippies and New Leftists, on the whole, had been different people. Hundreds of thousands, if not millions of hippie purists, refused to participate in political demonstrations, while some demonstrators eschewed cultural pursuits and cultural radicalism or believed that the counterculture was silly, a joke, or seriously misguided strategically and philosophically.

In the early seventies, this was no longer the case. Young activists and political radicals developed hippie values, while engaging in quintessential hippie activities, closing the gap between themselves and hippie purists.

Hippies and activists became indistinguishable; they were often the same people. In Louisville, Kentucky, for instance, youth gathered for a “picnic for peace” in the city’s Central Park. The University of Louisville Committee for Survival, an

¹⁷ “Celebrate! Celebrate! Dance to the Music,” *Cahoots* (Joplin, MO), June 1971.

¹⁸ TNW, “Youth Coalition,” *Berkeley Tribe*, 11-18 September 1970.

organization active in both the anti-draft and ecology movements, sponsored the event. Conception and Milk Sea provided music for nearly 1,000 people who basked lazily in the sun. Picnic revelers wearing flowers-in-their-hair shared cookies, fruit, sandwiches, water, and marijuana—and then they became demonstrators. About 600 people marched to the post office led by a “couple of freaks” carrying a banner: “out of Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia.” At their destination, the protesters chanted, “Whadda we want? Peace. When do we want it? Now.”¹⁹

A countercultural atmosphere pervaded demonstrations. Activists considered themselves “Movement freaks,” part of “Woodstock Nation,” and they spoke of “building a new America.” Protests resembled counterculture gatherings and radiated an ambiance similar to rock festivals and the love-ins of the late 1960s. At the White House, young people splashed naked in a fountain. Guerrilla theater actors and actresses soaked in animal blood held out bloody animal organs to spectators and shouted, “This is the blood of the victims of the war!” Protestors sold, and smoked, marijuana joints. At least 15,000 stayed the night near the Washington Monument huddled in sleeping bags as a rock bands played into the early morning hours. Jesus Freaks walked around urging the crowds to “get right with God,” bands sang “Freak out, freak out, freak out now,” while people danced happily in the mud. At a demonstration in New York, an estimated 20,000 sat on the grass in Central Park listening to speeches and music. Blue jeans and army fatigues were popular clothing items.²⁰

¹⁹ Junot, “Peace Picnic.”

²⁰ John Herbers, “Big Capital Rally Asks U.S. Pullout In Southeast Asia,” *New York Times*, 10 May 1970, p. 1, 24; “All Sides Applaud Peaceful Protest in Washington,” *New York Times*, 26 April 1971, p. 31; Lee James, “Joplin’s People’s Coalition for Peace Demonstrate,” *Cahoots* (Joplin, MO), June 1971;

New Left-counterculture fusion also occurred because nearly all rebellious youth pursued cultural radicalism. Fewer students protested the war. As Nixon wound the war down, the anti-war movement faded. April 24, 1971, marked the last major *national* demonstration. Indeed, a 1971 study of college students revealed that only eleven percent identified with the New Left, while the other 89 percent “pressed forward in their search for a cultural revolution while taking a step backwards from political revolution.” After agitating politically for years, some activists sought to repair their psyches and put their lives back together. Politicos, like hippies, headed back-to-the-land for solace and reflection and waged personal revolutions. Ex-activists dedicated to “renewing the social order,” and changing their daily thought and life patterns, bought 280 acres, a house, and a barn in Oregon, establishing Alpha Farm. Similarly, political radicals and psychedelic dropouts set up Mayday Farm together in Vermont. Tom Hayden joined a Berkeley commune, the Red Family. Carl Oglesby, a former president of SDS, decided, “that it was time to burn out and, really, it was a great burnout.” Oglesby ended up on a farm in Vermont where he enjoyed “Lots of parties, great reefer, good acid,” and lovely friends. “It was the best part of the struggle,” he recalled, “The best part of the struggle was the surrender.”²¹

The New Left-counterculture merger occurred for another reason as well: hippie purists diminished in number. Individuals espousing rock revolution, for the most part, disappeared. In addition, most freaks no longer believed that cultural revolution would

Joseph Lelyveld, “Status of the Movement: The ‘Energy Levels’ Are Low,” *New York Times*, 7 November 1971; Martin Gansberg, “Thousands Join in War Protest,” *New York Times*, 7 November 1971, p. 81.

²¹ Daniel Yankelovich, *The Changing Values on Campus: Political and Personal Attitudes of Today’s College Students* (New York, 1972), 7; Lee and Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 262; Miller, *60s Communes*, 75-76, 88; Morrison and Morrison, *From Camelot to Kent State*, 307.

arrive by way of dope and drugs; in fact, the deaths of rock superstars Janis Joplin, Jim Morrison, and Jimi Hendrix belied that fanciful notion. Purists grew weary waiting for the revolution; rather, they strived to make it happen. In 1968 John Lennon had exemplified the hippie purist position in the song “Revolution,” when he advocated “changing heads” and “freeing minds” as the best path to social change. By 1971, however, he advocated direct involvement, singing, “Say we want a revolution/We better get it on right away/Well you get on your feet/And out on the street.” Moreover, fewer hippies believed that transforming their individual outlooks and values—personal revolutions—were sufficient to bring about lasting social and cultural change; something more tangible, more immediate, had to be done. In the early seventies, cultural activism burgeoned. Hippie purists closed the gap between themselves and New Leftists as they created alternative institutions.²²

Violent actions committed by political revolutionaries also facilitated the merging of New Left and counterculture. In the early morning hours of August 24, 1970, a militant group known as the New Year’s Gang led by Karl Armstrong detonated a bomb at the Army Mathematics Research Center at the University of Wisconsin. Earlier, Karl Armstrong had been a Eugene McCarthy supporter and became a radical following the Democratic National Convention. Opponents of Army Math contended that its researchers aided the American military in Vietnam. The facility became a target—Armstrong intended to “bring the war home.” The New Year’s Gang loaded a stolen van full of explosives, parked it next to Sterling Hall—the building that housed

²² Ray Coleman, *Lennon: The Definitive Biography* (New York, 1992), 561.

Army Math—and lit the fuse. The bomb destroyed Sterling Hall, damaged 26 adjacent buildings, and shattered windows over a six-block area. The explosion blew people who lived near the site out of bed. The blast, which killed one and wounded three others, woke the city and could be heard for 30 miles.²³

The incident stunned the Wisconsin campus and Madison residents. Students almost universally regretted the death of Robert Fassnacht, a 33-year-old postdoctoral researcher in physics. Ironically, Fassnacht had opposed the war. Most students found the bombing revolting and condemned it. “What the hell, they didn’t accomplish anything except hurt the university,” argued a 23-year-old political science major. “The Army can build 10 more research centers, but the bombing has turned hostility toward the wrong persons—the students.” A young female student felt “disgusted” and asserted, “I don’t see how the university can go on. The bombing typifies the atmosphere that pervades this campus, an atmosphere of violence, intolerance and irrationalities.”²⁴

The bombing’s impact extended far beyond the Wisconsin campus. After the incident, the anti-war movement generally retreated from violence and activists worked within the system to affect change. The New Year’s Gang’s deeds did not kill the movement, but altered it. The Army Math bombing demonstrated that the use of violence to hasten social change could produce tragic results. Armstrong’s actions did

²³ Anderson, *Movement and the Sixties*, 367; Tom Bates, *Rads: The 1970 Bombing of the Army Math Research Center at the University of Wisconsin and its Aftermath* (New York, 1992), 3-16.

²⁴ “Madison, Wis., Is Tense After Blast,” *New York Times*, 30 August 1970, p. 40.

not give rise to revolution; instead, as author Tom Bates has argued, “they had brought about a renewal of the peace movement’s original commitment to nonviolence.”²⁵

As political violence receded, liberal activists, hippies, and what remained of the New Left, became a more unified counterculture. In 1971, a survey of college students revealed that a mere ten percent categorized themselves as politically radical. Almost 70 percent did not believe that a mass revolutionary party should be created, and 87 percent thought that radicals of the Left threatened individual rights as much as the radical Right. Violent revolutionaries no longer figured prominently in the movement; thus, few people remained with whom hippie purists differed philosophically. Three Weathermen blew themselves and their townhouse to smithereens in Greenwich Village in March 1970 after one man accidentally touched off a nail bomb. The Weathermen—extreme, isolated, and few in number—went underground. During the same period, a bomb killed two members of SNCC attending the arson trial of H. Rap Brown. These explosions, including the Sterling Hall bombing, shattered the romantic image of the revolutionaries. Meanwhile, the Black Panthers faced their ruin under government surveillance and repression. In 1969 alone, police killed an estimated 28 Panthers and incarcerated hundreds of others. Released from prison in 1970, Panther co-founder Huey Newton became a cocaine addict and megalomaniac and SNCC’s Stokeley Carmichael went into exile.²⁶

²⁵ Bates, *Rads*, 55, 443-444.

²⁶ Yankelovich, *Changing Values On Campus*, 59, 64; Lytle, *America’s Uncivil Wars*, 345, 352, 371; Isserman and Kazin, *America Divided*, 283; Panthers in William H. Chafe, *The Unfinished Journey: America Since World War II*, 6th ed (New York, 2007), 395.

A united dissident youth culture attended rock festivals, which had not died at Altamont. Most hippies, rock enthusiasts, and promoters had forgotten about the tragedy of Altamont or dismissed it as the new decade began. Middle Americans and law enforcement officials, however, had not. For them, counterculture gatherings promoted drug abuse, social chaos, and moral decline, and they sought to prevent further rock events from taking place. To stop them, anti-festival forces used two effective techniques: court injunctions, and health and sanitary regulations. Court injunctions were difficult to obtain, but even the threat of one often dissuaded organizers from attempting to establish an event in a contested locale. Health regulations, too, worked to the advantage of anti-festival citizens as promoters refused to deal with the hassle of abiding by such rules, taking their festival plans elsewhere. A court injunction derailed the Powder Ridge Festival in New York, but hippies attended other successful festivals. At the Atlanta Pop Festival over July 4th weekend, 200,000 enjoyed music by the Allman Brothers, Procol Harum, Rare Earth, Cactus, Poco, and Johnny Winter. Freaks also loved New York's Randall Island Festival that featured Grand Funk Railroad, Jethro Tull, Steppenwolf, and Ten Years After.²⁷

Rock's most fervent devotees considered it an instrument of revolution. "MUSIC IS REVOLUTION," proclaimed John Sinclair. "Rock and roll music is one of the most vital forces in the West—it blows people all the way back to their senses and makes them feel good, like they're alive again in the middle of this monstrous funeral parlor of western civilization." The revolution involved establishing "a situation on this

²⁷ Santelli, *Aquarius Rising*, 187-188, 215-228.

planet where all people can feel good all the time.” Sinclair praised rock as a “weapon of cultural revolution” and “model of the revolutionary future” because it was “immediate, total, fast-changing and on-going.” The music, Sinclair believed, worked “to free people on all levels.” Rock also produced a sense of community; rock bands and “tribes,” like communes, were “totally interdependent and totally committed to the same end.” Franklin Bach, minister of the White Panther Party, exalted rock in a similar fashion, ascribing great power to it. For Bach and other hippies, rock furthered individuals’ personal development, and enhanced their strength, while liberating them. “Our rock and roll is the baddest music of all time,” he wrote in an underground, “It’s the nitty-gritty, the most open, out front statement of how we feel and think and move and love one another there is. Rock has given us strength, kept us growing, set us free.”²⁸

Warner Brothers’s release of the three-hour, color film *Woodstock* dealt a deathblow to proponents of rock revolution. The Woodstock festival was, from the beginning, a business venture. The four promoters wanted at least 50,000 people to come to the festival and they began advertising in undergrounds across the country and on hip radio stations. When the festival ended, it seemed as though the enterprise had failed; the promoters claimed they had lost over a million dollars. They did not stay in the red for long. The Woodstock film, released in March 1970, set box office records in New York, Washington D.C., Boston, Dallas, and Los Angeles, and eventually grossed some seventeen million. Ticket prices sold for five dollars, a higher price of admission

²⁸ John Sinclair, *Guitar Army* (New York, 1972), 113-119; Franklin Bach, “Getting Off Our Rock,” *Madison Kaleidoscope*, 5 May 1970.

compared to other features. The White Panthers and other radical organizations organized a boycott of the film, calling it a culture rip-off. The *Woodstock* soundtrack on LP also sold well, pushing ten million units by July. The film, a critical success and embraced by the mainstream, won the Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature.²⁹

Rock festivals, too, became big business, another reality that damaged the hippies' faith in rock revolution. Promoters capitalized on the popularity of festivals, hoping to accumulate large profits. In 1970, entrepreneurs touted their events as "another Woodstock." Abbie Hoffman and others attacked festival promoters as vanguard capitalists only interested in profits and accused them of atrophying the festivals' social significance. Hoffman and the Yippies demanded an end to these capitalist ventures and went on an "offensive," demanding half of the profits of a planned New York festival. Rock artists also became wealthy off of festivals. In 1969, the highest paid entertainers made around \$15,000 for their performances; in 1970, bands like Led Zeppelin and Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young demanded and received as much as \$50,000 for a single show.³⁰

While hippies enjoyed festivals, the Left fragmented, splintering into several autonomous movements seeking individual empowerment; gays, Indians, Chicanos, women, and blacks agitated for their rights. The counterculture interacted and contended with several of these social and political movements.

²⁹ Joan Holden, "The Woodstock Movie: A \$4 Revolution," *Ramparts*, October 1970, 60-62, 64; Santelli, *Aquarius Rising*, 149-150; Ward, Stokes, and Tucker, *Rock of Ages*, 431.

³⁰ Santelli, *Aquarius Rising*, 189-190.

Hippies encountered women's liberation. Its antecedents dated back to 1963 when Betty Friedan published *The Feminine Mystique*, which aided feminism's resurgence. The book exposed "The Problem That Has No Name": many American women—especially those with college degrees—lived unfulfilled lives, experiencing depression, illness, and suicidal thoughts, because society had foisted the feminine mystique and role of housewife and mother upon them. Friedan encouraged women to break free from this mold by pursuing higher education and careers. She also called for the government to offer financial assistance to women like it had for men. Friedan argued that, in order for women to reach their full potential, traditional marriage roles had to be redefined and husbands needed to assist their wives with nurturing children.³¹

The modern women's movement also had its roots in the New Left and civil rights. Within the movement, women experienced male sexism and domination. At a conference in the fall of 1964, Casey Hayden and Mary King of SNCC anonymously circulated a position paper that broached the issue. Women, the authors showed, had been relegated to clerical work and barred from decision-making processes and leadership positions because of "the assumption of male superiority." SNCC president Stokely Carmichael answered their memo by stating famously that a woman's place in the organization was "prone." The following year, Hayden and King produced "a sort of memo," which argued that movement women were members of a sex-caste system and were exploited. Other women felt the same way. In 1966 and 1967, women in SDS

³¹ John Robert Greene, *America in the Sixties* (Syracuse, 2010), 112; Isserman and Kazin, *America Divided*, 127-128.

organized women's caucuses and workshops. Soon, independent women's liberation groups formed throughout the nation, including Chicago and New York.³²

Meanwhile, another arm of the nascent feminist movement materialized. Women displeased with the results of the Kennedy Commission and Johnson's Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and its reluctance to enforce Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which outlawed sex discrimination in employment, formed the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966. Betty Friedan was among the founding members. NOW stated its commitment to a "fully equal partnership of the sexes" and its intention to "bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society."³³

Many younger movement women and feminists, however, viewed NOW as a moderate political organization with a legalistic approach that moved too slowly. "Radical Women" and "Women's Liberationists" called for full gender equality and they wanted it more quickly. Groups like the Redstockings focused on women's immediate private lives. They called for an "assault on marriage and the family," recommended that children be raised communally, and argued that freedom would entail getting "child-rearing off their backs." New York Radical Women simply stated, "We take the women's side in everything."³⁴

In 1970, women's liberation came to fruition. On August 26, women's groups from NOW to radical feminists to lesbians to moderate businesswomen staged the

³² Greene, *America in the Sixties*, 113; Sara Evans, *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left* (New York, 1979), 84-88; Isserman and Kazin, *America Divided*, 187.

³³ Greene, *America in the Sixties*, 114.

³⁴ Redstockings and New York Radical Women quoted in Greene, *America in the Sixties*, 115.

Women's Strike for Equality. The massive coalition demanded child-care centers, abortion on demand, equal pay, equal educational opportunities, and the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. Tens of thousands of women marched in New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., Seattle, Denver, Boston, and Baltimore. The feminist impulse spread widely. In most cities and on most campuses, feminists established "consciousness-raising" groups and their own newspapers, coffeehouses, women's shelters, health clinics, and bookstores.

The radical and political women's movement never became a part of the counterculture; on the contrary, many feminists actively opposed and criticized hippiedom. The counterculture predated women's liberation, and like the mainstream culture surrounding it, the male-dominated counterculture was, initially, sexist and hierarchical. During the 1960s, many male hippies—while radical in most respects—held traditional ideas about females, femininity, and gender roles.

Men dominated rock and roll and their lyrics advanced sexist messages. The Rolling Stones' songs in particular put women down—"Stupid Girl," "Under My Thumb," "Honky-Tonk Women," and "Brown Sugar." On the Beatles song "Run For Your Life," John Lennon sang, "I'd rather see you dead little girl than to be with another man." Women played limited roles in rock, as go-go dancers or "groupies." In rock culture, it was believed that women were not strong enough to play the drums or aggressive enough to play hard-driving rock. Females typically played acoustic, not electric guitars, and all-female rock bands were extremely rare; Ace of Cups out of San Francisco was an exception. Women in rock steadily lost stature as hit-makers as well;

collectively, women “declined on the year-end singles charts from an all-time high of 32 percent in 1963 to six percent in 1969.”³⁵

The underground press sexually exploited women. Naked nymphs appeared all over the pages of the underground newspapers and so did graphic sex ads. Men propositioned women—“groovy chicks who like to smoke weed and ball”—in the personal classified sections. Pornographic papers originated in the underground press. *Screw* was one of the most popular, originally published out of the office of the *New York Free Press* in a scheme to make additional money.³⁶

For many feminists, the sexual revolution was a sham; in actuality, they believed, it was a “male sexual revolution.” Sexual liberation became a cover for promiscuity. Men capitalized on women’s new sexual availability and expected to sleep with as many women as possible, regardless of the women’s needs. Unrestrained male libidos had dire consequences for women such as rape, unwanted pregnancy, and abandonment. Movement women, and some movement men, found the White Panthers’ manifesto revolting. It urged men to “Fuck your woman so hard till she can’t stand up.”³⁷

Political feminists found it increasingly difficult to distinguish the hippies’ treatment of women from the Establishment’s. A cartoon that appeared in undergrounds depicted two men discussing their lives. A straight man, holding a briefcase and dressed in suit and tie says, “When I come home from the office, beat, My wife gives me

³⁵ Rat Staff, “Cock Rock: Men Always Seem To End Up On Top,” *Rat* (New York), 15 October 1970 – 18 November 1970; Garofalo, *Rockin’ Out*, 210.

³⁶ See *Seventy-nine Cent Spread*, 5 November 1968; Sandra Levinson, “Sexploitation in the Underground Press, *Ramparts*, August 1969, 66-70.

³⁷ Ruth Rosen, *The World Split Open: How the Modern Women’s Movement Changed America* (New York, 2000), 144-145; White Panthers quoted in Gitlin, *The Sixties*, 372.

something good to eat. She takes good care of my kids all day and to be frank, she's a terrific lay." The longhaired hippie wearing a peace medallion responds, "My old lady's outasite. Made brown rice and fish last nite. She's soft and quiet and good for my head. Her sign is Virgo, and she's good in bed."³⁸

In her essay "Goodbye To All That," which appeared in the underground *Rat* in February 1970, Robin Morgan took aim at the "counterfeit male-dominated Left." After censuring the New Left, Morgan concentrated her broadsides on the counterculture: "Goodbye to Hip Culture and the so-called Sexual Revolution, which has functioned toward women's freedom as did Reconstruction toward former slaves—reinstated oppression by another name." Morgan criticized several male counterculturalists, including Hugh Romney—Wavy Gravy of the Hog Farm commune. Morgan pointed out that Romney considered himself a part of the "cultural revolution," and yet he had boasted that Hog Farm's women made the commune's clothing. Morgan proceeded to compare Abbie Hoffman to a "movie star" before admonishing him for ditching "the first wife and kids" as soon as he was "Making It." Morgan also said goodbye to Paul Krassner, yippie and editor of the *Realist*, for bragging about sleeping with a number of women in the movement and for being a "sexist oppressor." She also called John Sinclair a "counterfeit Christ." Finally, "Goodbye To All That," criticized the ecology movement—and by extension the back-to-the-land movement—for its celebration of "earth mothers" and "frontier chicks." Morgan argued that leadership of the movement

³⁸ "Up From Under Women Unite," *Sunshine Aura* (Erie, PA), Vol. II, No. VI (1972).

should be ceded to women as they did not pollute and their bodies were “locked-in” to humanity and the biosphere.³⁹

The *Rat* staff also focused on sexism in the world of rock. A former hippie female turned women’s liberationist elucidated how hippie men expected their women to conform to a specific—and limited—role:

Women are required at rock events to pay homage to the rock world And what is that woman supposed to be like? Well it’s not enough to be just a plain old cunt—we have to be beautiful and even that’s not enough—we’ve got to be groovy—you know, not uptight, not demanding, not jealous or clinging or strong or smart or anything but loving in a way that never cuts back on a man’s freedom. And so women remain the last legitimate form of property that the brothers can share in a communal world. Can’t have a tribal gathering without music and dope and beautiful groovy chicks.

Most radical and political feminists advised women to abandon what they saw as a oppressive counterculture. “In culture after culture men have destroyed our minds and fucked over our bodies,” asserted *Rat*. “There is no reason for us to go back into the alienation and isolation of Woodstock Nation.”⁴⁰

Feminists criticized female communards. The women that came out of the New Left had liberated themselves from discrimination and sexual objectification and branded gender as a construct; hippie females puzzled and angered political feminists because they seemed content with essentialist gender roles in the counterculture. “On the street, on the road, in tribes, families and communes—the female is much in

³⁹ Robin Morgan, “Goodbye To All That,” *Rat* (New York), 6 February 1970.

⁴⁰ *Rat* Staff, “Cock Rock.”

evidence” a feminist wrote to the *Berkeley Barb*. “She’s the cow—the little mother—the breadwinner—the vagina, and most of all, she’s available.”⁴¹

Other feminists, however, took part in the counterculture. As Gretchen Lemke-Santangelo has persuasively argued in her book *Daughters of Aquarius*, hippie women were cultural feminists. Hip females rebelled against mainstream class and gender norms, while rejecting and evading suburban domesticity. In rural communes, they resuscitated an older, agrarian ideal that placed a greater value on women’s labor and productivity. Hippie women abandoned the nuclear family norm, engaging in a communal lifestyle that allowed them to share chores, advice, and knowledge with other women. They found their work varied and challenging. Performed in the service of the larger countercultural project, women assigned political significance to their exertions. Females played an integral role in the counterculture. Men often made “transitory contributions” in communes, so women’s efforts sustained hippiedom. Their sense of self-importance was enhanced because women were believed to naturally possess characteristics essential to the hippie philosophy and way of life—cooperation, reciprocity, expressiveness, closeness to nature, egalitarianism, and nonaggression. And sexual liberation benefited many hippie women; it, in effect, “ultimately translated into a wider range of options, including lesbian partnerships.” “Slowly but surely,” writes Lemke-Santangelo, hippie females “began to articulate a feminist vision that emphasized the dignity, if not superiority, of traditional ‘feminine’ values and labor.”⁴²

⁴¹ Lemke-Santangelo, *Daughters of Aquarius*, 22; Queen of the Gypsies, “Ego Trips,” *Berkeley Barb*, 7-13 August 1970.

⁴² Lemke-Santangelo, *Daughters of Aquarius*, 2, 4.

Many hip men initially resisted political feminism, especially its radical variant. Male counterculturalists had great difficulty adjusting to the women's movement and changing their sexual values, which celebrated heterosexuality, often centered around a man's desires, needs, pleasure, and satisfaction. Male freaks found it difficult to alter their values, for their sexual ethics had been firmly entrenched since the mid 1960s, before the ascent of feminism. Some hip males' responses to women's liberation bordered on hostile, focusing predominantly on sexual issues. "Are we all really the male chauvinist pigs that the more extreme wing of Fem Lib contends we are?" asked Norman Spinrad of the *Los Angeles Free Press*. "The more extreme elements of the Fem Lib movement," he continued, "exhibit a pathological female chauvinism that puts to shame even the most rabid male supremacist." For some hip males, certain aims of the feminist movement were antithetical to counterculture values. Hippies championed open sexual expression and free speech, principles feminists seemed to be attacking. Spinrad accused feminists of "re-establishing Victorian sexual shackles for men." He then condemned the feminist attack on sexually explicit materials, writing, "Unless we are prepared to accept the hoary puritan notion that all sexual feelings are evil, there is nothing inherently wrong with pornography." Instead of assailing male-oriented skin flicks, Spinrad suggested that women demand or produce pornography that appealed to women. He went on to accuse women of being partially responsible for the proliferation of pornography because they put men through hoops just "to get a little." Consequently, men had no other choice but to consume pornography as "a substitute for you, baby." The columnist then turned to what he called the "Cult of the Vibrator," lamenting that

the use of such devices denied “not merely the humanity of sex but the community of life.” Spinrad acknowledged that many men treated women badly and as a result, the women’s movement attracted “lesbians, confused asexual man-haters, or enraged neo-puritan neurotics.” These kinds of women, he maintained, gave men, who would otherwise be sympathetic to “legitimate” and “reasonable” feminist movement objectives, “bad vibes.” For Spinrad, the women’s movement had reached a critical juncture. “Women’s Liberation will eventually have to make some cold, hard decisions,” he wrote. “As things now stand, the movement is on its way to alienating the male population with its overtones of puritanism, anti-sexuality, psychopathology, and female chauvinism.”⁴³

Male counterculturalists did eventually become sympathetic and responsive to feminism. The underground press, by the early 1970s, frequently published articles and editorials pertaining to women’s liberation and lesbianism. Communes battled sexism and championed egalitarianism. Movement for a New Society sought to eliminate sexism and abolish rigid gender roles. At Twin Oaks, residents did not distinguish between “men’s work” and “women’s work”—the community allowed and encouraged females to try their hand at every kind of labor. Women learned carpentry, auto mechanics, drove tractors, and shoveled manure, while men learned cooking, knitting,

⁴³ Norman Spinrad, “You’ve Come a Long Way Baby,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 11-17 September 1970.

sewing, and washed dishes. Men did not expect women to wear make up or follow the latest fashion trends.⁴⁴

Finally, the counterculture came into contact with gay liberation. The dominant culture and society ridiculed and demonized gays. Every state in the union had made homosexual activity illegal and most Americans called their behavior “deviant.” In the 1950s, researcher Alfred Kinsey reported homosexual behavior, yet many chose to deny their existence. Those who acknowledged their presence often went on the attack; straight people menaced gays with taunts like “queer,” “fag,” and “homo.” Mental health professionals and doctors deemed homosexuality an illness, subjecting gays to a wide variety of “treatments”—electroshock, hypnotism, and large drug doses. Gays lived a harried existence. Police looked the other way as toughs beat them, the military dishonorably discharged them, local communities harassed them, and government employers frequently fired them.⁴⁵

One of the last movements to emerge during the era, gay liberationists arose to challenge the social structures that kept them underground and hidden. Unlike other movements, gay liberation’s origins can be traced a single spontaneous event: Stonewall. On June 27, 1969, Manhattan police attempted to close the Stonewall Inn, a Greenwich Village bar and gay hangout. Police had routinely raided gay bars throughout the 1960s, but nothing went according to plan this time. Lawmen brought patrons out of the Stonewall Inn and put them into police vans. A crowd assembled outside and taunted

⁴⁴ Flyer, *We Can Envision A New Society*; Brochure, *Moving Toward A New Society*; Newsletter, *Leaves of Twin Oaks*, April 1972, David L. Rice Library, University of Southern Indiana, Evansville.

⁴⁵ Anderson, *Movement and the Sixties*, 317-318.

the officers. Inside, a lesbian began putting up a fight, igniting a violent scene. Gays hurled bottles and coins at the police and someone set the Inn alight. Officers clashed with rioting homosexual crowds late into the night. Graffiti proclaiming “Gay Power” appeared on the walls and sidewalks of Greenwich Village the next day. The riots, which occurred over an entire weekend, indicated that a major social movement had arrived.⁴⁶

Gay liberation evolved into a powerful movement. Gay radicals demonstrated against businesses that discriminated against homosexuals and established their own newspapers, *Gay Power* and *Come Out!* Others staged street dances in New York, Chicago, and Berkeley, and on the first anniversary of Stonewall in June 1970, 10,000 activists proudly marched down New York’s Sixth Avenue. Nearly 800 gay and lesbian groups had formed by 1973. They established their own bars, churches, medical clinics, restaurants, newspapers, law offices, travel agencies, community centers, and many other businesses. At least ten cities passed gay rights ordinances, a success for activists.⁴⁷

The counterculture shared a somewhat ambiguous relationship with gay liberation. Hippies were overwhelmingly heterosexual. Although most counterculturalists tolerated gays, some bordered on homophobic. Timothy Leary touted acid as a cure for homosexuality. On the street and in underground newspapers, hippies commonly threw around the term “fag” or “faggot” as an insult. When hip capitalists

⁴⁶ John D’ Emilio and Estelle B. Freedman, *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America*, (Chicago, 1997), 318-319.

⁴⁷ Anderson, *Movement and the Sixties*, 318-319, 405; D’ Emilio and Freedman, *Intimate Matters*, 323.

took over an establishment and opened it up as a rock ballroom in the Haight, they named it the Straight Theater to ward off gays accustomed to watching pornography films there. The *East Village Other's* founder Walter Bowart refused to put out a story on Andy Warhol's film *Chelsea Girls* because he disliked the scene surrounding the artist. "The blatant displays of homosexuality were not pleasing to me," Bowart recalled. Although many communes accepted homosexual members, many did not always fit in comfortably among their mostly heterosexual peers.⁴⁸

Most hippies, however, kept an open mind and accepted gays. By the early seventies, undergrounds provided abundant coverage of gay liberation and rights. Jefferson Poland, who founded the Sexual Freedom League, considered himself a bisexual and the SFL championed the gay cause. Ron Thelin claimed that "no prejudice" existed toward homosexuals in the Haight-Ashbury. Pink Floyd headlined a benefit concert for the Gay Liberation Front in 1971. Gay men testified to the good treatment they received from the hip. "I feel so free among them, being older, since they accept all ages and treat all as humans," remarked one gay man. "They are broadminded toward us, although 99 percent [are] heterosexual, as I see so many with their arms around girls." Other gay men felt a kinship with the hippies as police and majority society harassed and persecuted both groups. "We should tell off the Establishment as do the hippies," commented one. "As minorities, we have enough in common to support

⁴⁸ Leary and Straight Theater in Alice Echols, *Shaky Ground: The 60s and Its Aftershocks* (New York, 2002), 33-34, 148; Bowart quoted in Peck, *Uncovering the Sixties*, 33; Miller, *The 60s Communes*, 138.

them.” Another gay man asserted, “We should fight for the hippies’ rights as if they were our own.”⁴⁹

Many homosexuals became hippies, adopting the counterculture’s styles, values, and practices. “Make way for the new homosexual of the Seventies,” wrote Tom Burke in *Esquire*, “an unfettered, guiltless male child of the new morality in a Zapata moustache and an outlaw hat, who couldn’t care less for Establishment approval, would as soon sleep with boys as girls, and thinks that ‘Over the Rainbow’ is a place to fly on 200 micrograms of lysergic acid diethylamide.” Gays and bisexuals, for example, immersed themselves in the counterculture in New York City and Los Angeles; they read *Steppenwolf* and tarot cards, smoked marijuana, dropped acid, applied body paint, wore Indian headbands, necklaces, military surplus, and spoke of love and peace.⁵⁰

While gays became part of the counterculture, the hippies—who had never had strong ties to black militants to begin with—parted ways with Black Power. After a falling out with Timothy Leary in Algeria in the 1971, Eldridge Cleaver no longer found hippies constructive to the cause of black people: “It was very useful some years ago when people rebelled against the straitjacket rules and regulations of Babylonian society . . . by shattering to smithereens those values, by getting high, freaking out, whatever term you want to apply It is no longer useful to our struggle and it has to be stopped.” The Panther did not consider hippies revolutionary. Neither were the Yippies and Cleaver denounced them at the end of 1970. Cleaver wanted people to “gather their

⁴⁹ Allyn, *Make Love, Not War*, 162; Doggett, *There’s A Riot Going On*, 496; Merla Zellerbach, “The Gay Community Views the Hippies,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 31 July 1967, p. 37.

⁵⁰ Tom Burke, “The New Homosexual,” *Esquire*, December 1969, 178.

wits,” “sober up” and “get down to the serious business of destroying the Babylonian empire.”⁵¹

In the early seventies, millions of young people felt a part of hippiedom and participated in it. The counterculture peaked in 1971. “It Just Won’t Go Away,” announced *Commonweal* in October. “The counter-culture is alive and growing.” Many—if not most—of the 40 million Americans aged 15 to 25 partook in—or, at a minimum, sympathized with—some aspect of the counterculture, whether it be growing longer hair, wearing bellbottoms, using dope and drugs, seeking to discover oneself, holding a lenient attitude about sex, tolerating dissenting politics and lifestyles, questioning authority, opposing the war, digging rock, or building the new society.⁵²

In 1971, the last major national anti-war demonstrations occurred. On April 23, alienated veterans protested in Washington, D.C. Over 20,000 members of Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) marched to the capitol where they threw their medals and ribbons over a fence to protest the war machine. Veterans—some in wheelchairs; others missing a limb—wept or raged against U.S. policy. VVAW included men who looked like hippies; they grew long hair, sideburns, mustaches, wore old tattered army fatigues, and used marijuana. “It is a war and we are soldiers again, as tight as we have ever been, a whole lost generation of dope-smoking kids in worn jungle

⁵¹ 1971 quote in Peck, *Uncovering the Sixties*, 257-258; Jezer, *Abbie Hoffman*, 219-220.

⁵² Myron B. Bloy, Jr., “The Counter-Culture: It Just Won’t Go Away,” *Commonweal*, 8 October 1971, 29.

boots coming from all over the country to tell Nixon a thing or two,” wrote veteran Ron Kovic.⁵³

On April 24 in Washington, 500,000 protestors—hippies, students, adults, blacks, gays and lesbians, trade unionists, religious groups, and Vietnam vets—paraded down Pennsylvania Avenue towards the Capitol steps to demand an end to the war: “ENOUGH—OUT NOW!” In San Francisco, 150,000 demonstrators led by active duty servicemen marched seven miles to a rally in Golden Gate Park. May Day protests in Washington followed.

But on October 25 and 26, demonstrations in Washington organized by the People’s Coalition for Peace and Justice (PCPJ) and May Day Tribe attracted no more than 1,000 people. More turned out for November 6 protests—40,000 in San Francisco, 15,000 in Denver, 30,000 in New York, and 10,000 in Boston, but not the numbers of previous years.⁵⁴

The Anti-war movement’s energy dissipated because Nixon began to wind the war down. In 1971, draft calls declined from 17,000 per month at the beginning of the year to 10,000 in the fall. American casualty rates also plummeted. In May 1970, there were 200 per week; a year later, the number stood at 35. Moreover, Nixon was bringing the troops home; 150,000 had returned by the end of June. By the end of the year, only 157,000 troops remained in Vietnam.⁵⁵

⁵³ George Donelson Moss, *Vietnam: An American Ordeal*, 6th ed (New York, 2010), 313; Ron Kovic, *Born On the Fourth of July* (New York, 2005), 169-170.

⁵⁴ Zaroulis and Sullivan, *Who Spoke Up?*, 359-361, 370-371.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 372.

As the anti-war movement ebbed, the counterculture's numbers soared. "Students Are Turning Away From Protest to Seek Own Goals," declared the *New York Times*. After Kent State, massive protests had raged; now, students seemed "by and large, to be concentrating on the small, the individual and the personal." The new mood, according to Yale President Kingman Brewster, was one of "eerie tranquility." Weary of tear gas, nightsticks, and mass demonstrations, more and more students declared their independence, focusing on individual matters. Large numbers of activists became demoralized because they believed that their efforts had little effect on Washington. Few students wore Mao buttons anymore and even fewer paid attention to calls to shut down universities. At Oberlin College, a senior that had recently worked sixteen-hour days as head of the campus resistance movement remarked, "I'm tired, I'm beaten and I guess I just don't care."⁵⁶

The counterculture also peaked because alienation remained widespread. A survey of college students discovered that over 80 percent believed, either strongly or partially, that America was a racist nation. More than 60 percent thought that "things are going badly in the country" and a majority who held an opinion agreed with the statement "we are a sick society." Nearly 70 percent concluded that society, to some degree, was "characterized by 'injustice, insensibility, lack of candor, and inhumanity.'" Moreover, over a quarter of students had little faith in Democrats and Republicans; a

⁵⁶ Michael T. Kaufman, "Many Students Are Turning Away From Protest to Seek Own Goals," *New York Times*, 9 May 1971, p. 29; Gregory Wierzynsk, "All Quiet on the Campus Front," *Time*, 22 February 1971, 26-27.

Harris Poll indicated that 26 percent would refrain from voting or refuse to cast their ballot for a candidate of the major political parties.⁵⁷

In the 1970s, the counterculture's values continued to evolve, multiplying in number and growing in diversity. Hippies' sexual relationships and sexual morals grew increasingly sophisticated to the point where they challenged the institution of marriage. *The Harrad Experiment* by Robert Rimmer greatly influenced sexual liberationists. A 1967 novel about a sexually liberated college in New England, *The Harrad Experiment* communicated a clear thesis. Jealousy, monogamy, and shame would disappear if only people adopted a rational perspective on sex. Monogamy was grounded in the concept of women as property, a barbaric idea. Monogamy should be abolished in an enlightened world. Group marriages, the book contended, could be happy and satisfying without the consequences of jealousy, secrecy, adultery, and divorce. Liberated couples treated *The Harrad Experiment* as guide for a more fulfilling life. Some couples who formed relationships in the 1960s and 70s carried on non-monogamous, open relationships for multiple years or decades. In Berkeley, *Harrad Experiment* acolytes founded Harrad West. These individuals hoped to marry six, eight, or even a dozen people. Rimmer received so many letters from individuals in group marriages that he published the correspondence in two volumes. Group marriage became such a phenomenon that the *New York Times* estimated that at least 2,000 group marriages had occurred in the United States.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Yankelovich, *Changing Values on Campus*, 51, 59, 62; Wierzynsk, 26-27.

⁵⁸ Allyn, *Make Love, Not War*, 71-77.

Hippies still took dope—plenty of it—and its use grew extensive. A Gallup Poll revealed that over 40 percent of college students had tried pot, while a College Poll estimated a higher number at 60 percent. Marijuana and LSD also pushed into the Great Plains and Mountain West where it had not been as prevalent earlier. At the University of Kansas, a sample of 219 students indicated that 69 percent had smoked grass and 92 percent revealed that their friends smoked it.⁵⁹

The older generation found rising drug use rates among college students alarming, but the prevalence of dope and drugs at high schools distressed them even more. Educators, researchers, students, and federal health and law enforcement authorities noted that more and more high schoolers across the nation smoked marijuana. Although less common, LSD, speed, heroin, and cocaine filtered into high schools as well. “Now that sophomores in *my* high school are taking dope and acid, I *know* that the scene has spread all over the country,” a girl from a town of 4,000 in *Idaho* told a researcher.⁶⁰

Like dope, rock music remained an integral element of hippiedom—although it did not hold nearly as much significance as it had a few years earlier. The new crop of musicians, for most hippies, did not generate the same level of enthusiasm, excitement, or reverence as earlier musicians. The most famous and admired band of 1960s—the Beatles—split up in 1970. Underground papers no longer provided the same amount of coverage to music as they did before. Since 1967, the *Great Speckled Bird* asserted in

⁵⁹ Miller, *Hippies and American Values*, 27.

⁶⁰ James P. Sterba, “Drug Use Rises in City’s High Schools,” *New York Times*, 10 March 1969, p. 1; Pope, *Voices From the Drug Culture*, 5.

1971, “rock has ridden a downhill train . . . Where is the sense of discovery that was there when we first saw Hendrix or Joplin or the Stones or Cream?”⁶¹

Few bands could still produce excitement among freaks. Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young proved an exception. Hippies loved CSN&Y’s chart-topping *Déjà Vu*. David Crosby sang “Almost Cut My Hair,” a song that upheld long hair as a symbol of rebellion against straight society. The tune also popularized the phrase “let my freak flag fly.” The band also recorded Joni Mitchell’s “Woodstock,” a paean to the famous festival, communal values, and the hippie lifestyle. Following Kent State, CSN&Y released Neil Young’s single “Ohio,” which ultimately charged President Nixon with the murders, as the National Guardsmen were merely “tin soldiers.” The song had an “us versus them” feel to it; “soldiers are cutting us down,” sang Young as he exhorted the anti-war movement to confront the Establishment.⁶²

The 1970s also witnessed the ascent in popularity of the singer-songwriter. Musicians like James Taylor, Joni Mitchell, Carly Simon, Paul Simon, Carol King, and Harry Chapin exemplified the inward-turning characteristics of the counterculture as they wrote and performed deeply personal and introspective songs. The popularity of the singer-songwriter genre also represented a retreat from radical politics; most songs within this genre were apolitical. The recordings of singer-songwriters often featured acoustic guitar or piano and rarely employed studio effects. Carol King recorded *Tapestry* at the height of the women’s movement, and although the album lacked political content, it seemed to capture the feminist mood. King was one of the first

⁶¹ Juicy Lucy, “Rock Prevue,” *Great Speckled Bird* (Atlanta), 11 January 1971.

⁶² James E. Perone, *Music of the Counterculture Era* (Westport, CT, 2004), 62, 133-135.

female musicians to be taken seriously for her instrumental, vocal, and compositional talents.⁶³

Back-to-the-land commune building coincided with the hippies' new interest in country-rock, a genre fused country with rock and roll and that glorified simple living and rural traditions. Rock musicians recorded music that incorporated country themes, vocal styles, and instrumentation, pedal-steel guitar in particular. The rising popularity of country-rock, *Time* contended, was "a symptom of a general cultural reaction to the most unsettling decade the U.S. has yet endured. The yen to escape the corrupt present by returning to the virtuous past—real or imagined—has haunted Americans, never more so than today." Groups and artists such as Gram Parsons, the Byrds, Flying Burrito Brothers, New Riders of the Purple Sage, the Band, Poco, Eagles, Creedence Clearwater Revival, and Bob Dylan recorded and performed country-rock. These musicians showed hippies that country music was not solely the preserve of right-wing audiences and musicians. The success of Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young indicated that many youth had embraced country-styled music. Graham Nash's country-influenced "Teach Your Children"—which showcased the Grateful Dead's Jerry Garcia on pedal steel—went to number 16 on the Billboard pop chart.⁶⁴

Yet sex, drugs, and rock and roll never constituted the core of the counterculture, nor its primary objective. To be sure, when hippies first came into existence, these values had figured prominently among their principles. In the counterculture's final

⁶³ Perone, *Music of the Counterculture*, 30; Szatmary, *Rockin' In Time*, 193.

⁶⁴ "Down to Old Dixie and Back," *Time*, 12 January 1970, 43; Perone, *Music of the Counterculture*, 144-146; Szatmary, *Rockin' In Time*, 198.

years, however, these values assumed a small degree of importance in comparison to the hippies' emerging beliefs. Youth formed a different counterculture now, one made up, in large part, by the younger brothers and sisters of original hippies who constituted the quintessential counterculture of the late sixties. The emerging dissident youth culture and countersociety had different priorities, cherishing environmentalism, the organic, the outdoors, vegetarianism, back-to-the-land commune building, mobility, travel, and creating alternative institutions.

Environmentalism became one of the hippies' foremost ethics and it grew after Earth Day. Freaks believed that environmental problems numbered among the most crucial issues confronting humanity and they called for decisive and immediate efforts to confront those problems. "Ecology evolution is a fight for life," argued a New Mexico underground, *Astral Projection*, "and if action is not taken soon, the fight will be quickly lost." For most counterculturalists, humankind and nature were one—not separate—and individuals had an obligation to take care of and preserve the land, wildlife, and the environment. Being in harmony with nature entailed preserving humanity. By taking care of the environment, hippies argued, people ultimately looked after themselves and one another. Many longhairs assumed human preservation hung in the balance: "We are cheapening this life, defiling our world, and headed fast towards an extinction of our species."⁶⁵

Hippies advocated adopting environmentally-conscious lifestyles. To combat air pollution, they endorsed walking, riding a bike, hitchhiking, carpooling, or utilizing

⁶⁵ "Planet Homework," *Astral Projection* (Albuquerque), 18 June 1970; Worth, "Earth Rap."

mass transit, instead of driving a car. If one did drive a car, undergrounds advised people to keep the engine tuned and to get the pollution control devices checked regularly. Some cultural activists recommended initiating lawsuits as an effective means to fight air polluters. To conserve water, hippies urged people to refrain from bathing every day and to use as little water as possible when washing clothes. They promoted recycling and favored non-polluting energy sources. Undergrounds also recommended the use of various environmentally-friendly substances—potato slices, vinegar, and linseed oil for polishing wood furniture, salt to eliminate food stains, and baking soda in the place of toothpaste.⁶⁶

Ecology organizations proliferated at universities and in cities. Students on campuses from Maine to Hawaii expressed concerns on a variety of environmental crises ranging from global overpopulation to water pollution to preservation of natural areas. At the University of Minnesota, students disturbed by the effects of air pollution buried a gasoline engine in a mock funeral. Student activists conducted campaigns to save San Francisco Bay and northern California's redwood forests, and attempted to stop the building of new dams in the Colorado River. Students for Environmental Control at the University of Illinois-Champaign-Urbana removed six tons of refuse from a nearby creek, a University of Texas student founded a state environmental newsletter, and at the University of Washington, students prepared an 80-page document detailing the environmental problems of Puget Sound. Hundreds of students, many of them bearded

⁶⁶ Phillip Winslow, "Garbage," *Helix* (Seattle), Vol. 11, No. 13 (26 March 1970); Bob, "The Air Is Everywhere," *The Augur* (Eugene, OR), 2 July 1971; Day Chalurohdi, "A Proposal," and "Air Pollution Action" in *Astral Projection* (Albuquerque), 15 December 1971; Gail Seward and Brandi, "How You Can Improve The Environment," *Caravan* (Sarasota, FL), Vol. 1, No. 6 (1973).

and wearing hippie clothing, blocked access to the Santa Barbara Wharf to protest oil operations and oil pollution. Northwestern Students for a Better Environment proposed a statewide ban on laundry detergent and other phosphate-containing substances in Illinois. Crisis Biology at Indiana University fought the university's coal-burning power plants, a source of smoke pollution. At Michigan State, student government leaders and ecology clubs protested a proposal to build a highway across campus. In Seattle, the Institute for Ecological Studies held workshops on water resources, noise and air pollution, and population, and in Austin, Ecology Action urged people to start mini-recycling centers in their apartment complexes and neighborhoods. Other environmentalists opposed the building of oil pipelines.⁶⁷

Hippies, especially communards, lived environmentally-friendly lifestyles. Some communes attempted to be as energy efficient as possible. Intentional communities in the Minneapolis area, for example, consumed natural gas "at a rate 40 percent below that for an average Minneapolis house of 900 square feet occupied by 2.6 people, electric power at a rate 82 percent below the Minneapolis average, and gasoline at a rate 36 percent below the national average." Other communes pioneered the use of non-traditional forms of energy. The Farm in Tennessee utilized solar power and other alternative energies.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Hill, "Environment May Eclipse Vietnam" p. 1, 51; "200 Block a Wharf At Santa Barbara In Pollution Protest," *New York Times*, 30 January 1970, p. 23; Robert Nolte, "Students Turn Off War Protests, Turn to Issues Closer to Home," *Chicago Tribune*, 23 November 1971, p. 2; "Ecology," *Helix* (Seattle), Vol. 11, No. 13 (26 March 1970); "Mini Recycling Centers," *Rag* (Austin), 4 October 1971; Mary Kay Becker, "An Oil Report," *Northwest Passage* (Bellingham, WA), 20 December 1971.

⁶⁸ Michael Corr and Dan MacLeod, "Getting It Together," *Environment* 14, no. 9 (November 1972): 3; Miller, *60s Communes*, 118.

Closely related to environmentalism was the counterculture's newfound love of the outdoors. The press reported that the "backpacking boom" had "practically revolutionized American outdoor life." One survey estimated that twenty million Americans had tried backpacking and most of them fell between 18 and 34. Longhairs carrying backpacks with enough food, water, and clothing to last weeks, walked trails and penetrated deep into the isolated wilderness. Like their communitarian counterparts, they endeavored to escape society, daily hassles, urban life, and to find peace of mind. Three Berkeley street people searching for "better vibrations," for example, gathered their resources, bought packs, sleeping bags, and 80 pounds of brown rice, and went up into the Rocky Mountains where they built and lived in a lean-to. "Up there with the trees for four months I learned my head," remarked one of the men. Moreover, hippies felt absolutely free in the secluded wilderness, sleeping in meadows and sitting under waterfalls. Furthermore, the backpack itself became a symbol of significance for the counterculture; in contrast to the suitcase, which usually marked a temporary traveler with a permanent home, the backpack represented "transience and unfettered spirit."⁶⁹

Nature loving hippies also enjoyed camping. Freaks invaded national parks. In California, Yosemite proved a popular location for recreation. On peak weekends during the summer, 55,000 people came to the Yosemite valley, one third of them under the age of 25, according to estimates by park officials. Yosemite became the site of the first riot in national park history when the Park Service attempted to break up a party in Stoneman Meadow; rangers wielding rope, chemical Mace, and nightsticks battled over

⁶⁹ Susan Sands, "Backpacking: 'I Go to the Wilderness to Kick the Man-World Out of Me,'" *New York Times*, 9 May 1971, pp. xx1, 7, 9-10.

400 young people, resulting in over 130 arrests and 30 hospitalizations. The *Berkeley Tribe* described the eastern region of the Yosemite valley as an “occupied zone” for youth, while another writer urged a “freak army” to recapture the area. Hippies camped at other national parks, too. In Yellowstone, Grand Teton, and Sequoia parks, longhairs disrobed, blared rock music, pounded bongos, smoked dope, and grappled with older, Middle American campers. The Park Service established roving riot squads to quell disturbances, and at Point Reyes, north of San Francisco, rangers monitored backwoods sites where youth used dope and drugs.⁷⁰

Backpackers and campers infatuated with the wilderness frequently used the words “natural” and “green,” for hippies became obsessed with the “organic.” They valued organically grown food that sprang from uncontaminated natural soil, free of pesticides and fertilizers. Longhairs also purchased organic food because they eschewed highly refined, chemicalized, and processed goods. Hippies concerned with their health argued that organic food tasted better and contained more nutrition. Natural food without chemicals, they contended, made people happier and healthier. Traditional prepared and processed foodstuffs, on the other hand, could be harmful. Organic food, however, tended to be expensive; therefore, some hippies pooled their resources to buy in bulk directly from growers, which drove prices down. Freaks also planted and cultivated organic gardens and opened natural foods restaurants. The hip also prized

⁷⁰ Robert A. Jones, “National Parks: A Report on the Range War at Generation Gap,” *New York Times*, 25 July 1971.

natural whole grains from which a wide variety of foods—pudding, bread, noodles, soups, coffee, tea, cereals, and pancakes—could be made.⁷¹

Advocates of the organic employed natural remedies for common ailments such as cold, fever, and flu. The Minneapolis underground *Hundred Flowers*, for example, recommended treating colds with catnip, sage, peppermint, bayberry bark, ginseng, Indian hemp, and a host of other substances. For fevers, the paper vouched for sweet balm, shepherd's purse, wintergreen, and dandelion, and, for the flu, white pine and poplar.⁷²

Some hippies went beyond eating organic food and became vegetarians. Vegetarianism appealed to counterculturalists on several grounds. First, it was inexpensive. Second, DDT and other chemicals infiltrated meat, contaminates they hoped to avoid. Third, Eastern religions influenced hippies. Yoga stressed a balanced diet that included natural foods and Hindus emphasized the importance of all living things, including animals. Hippies also believed that vegetarianism aided meditation and facilitated reaching higher awareness. Fruitarians scrapped meat and vegetables altogether, eating fruit exclusively. Zen Buddhists adopted a macrobiotic diet, a ying and yang balancing of the food world, consisting of brown rice, fish, and vegetables. Macrobiotic enthusiasts insisted that their diets made them less aggressive and more

⁷¹ Newsletter, "This Organic World," *Ecolog*, No. 19, 15 July 1970, Social Protest Collection, BANC MSS 86/157 c; BANC FILM 2757, Reel 89, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley; "Food For Thought," *All You Can Eat* (New Brunswick, NJ), 20 July 1970; Maitreya, "Diet," *Home Cookin'* (Oklahoma City), 1 September 1972.

⁷² Dale, "Our New Age," *Hundred Flowers* (Minneapolis), 13 January 1972.

spiritual. Furthermore, many hippies adopted yoga and macrobiotic diets as a substitute for drugs.⁷³

Counterculturalists published books and catalogs celebrating nature, the natural, and simple living. Alicia Bay Laurel's *Living on the Earth*, a large paperback printed in "handwriting" style, contained "storm warnings, formulas, recipes, rumors, & country dances." Laurel instructed her readers on how to make tents, soap, wine, baskets, candles, herbal tea, musical instruments, and sandals out of old tires. *Living on the Earth* taught additional skills as well: how to smoke fish, build an outhouse, deliver one's own baby—even cremate a deceased loved one in the forest. The book also recommended the *I Ching* and Hatha Yoga and identified stores where one could buy natural foods and backpacking equipment.⁷⁴

More popular was Stewart Brands's *The Whole Earth Catalog*, which also appealed to cultural dissidents seeking to live the simple life. It also proved useful to communards learning to live off the land in rural environments. A counterculture Sears and Roebuck, the *Whole Earth Catalog* contained an enormous range of information and objects. One could find information on Danish earth shoes, High Lama prayer wheels, and Australian wind generators. Brands's catalog also featured books on Frank Lloyd Wright, cosmic energy, carpentry, and plumbing. One could also purchase volumes on goat husbandry and books on how to build fireplaces, domes, teepees, log and earth houses, and concrete boats.⁷⁵

⁷³ "The Kosher of the Counterculture," *Time*, 16 November 1970, 59-60, 63.

⁷⁴ Sonya Rudikoff, "O Pioneers!: Reflections on the Whole Earth People," *Commentary*, July 1972, 62.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 63-64.

Hippies treasured living naturally and they also valued mobility; thousands hit the road hitchhiking. The quest to see the country and to experience freedom and adventure impelled them to take to the highway. “Freedom is mobility of one kind or another, and mobility is the essence of a free life—particularly geographic mobility,” asserted an underground writer. And, like rock festivals and the earlier be-ins, hitchhiking fostered community. “It’s the brotherhood of the road,” said one hiker. “It’s the only place people are accepted for what they are. You don’t know anything about their past.” Youth from the East, Midwest, and Great Plains, hitchhiked across the country to California. Once they arrived, they usually moved up and down California 1—sometimes referred to as “hippie highway”—which ran along the Pacific Coast from Los Angeles to San Francisco. “Far out,” reported *Newsweek*, “Hundreds of hitchhiking freaks with beards, back packs, guitars, flutes, wild hair and dogs—the Panzer troops of the Age of Aquarius—in steady motion along California 1.” Near the on-ramps, especially in bustling cities, as many as 50 hitchhikers waited to be picked up by fellow freaks or anyone else willing to give them a lift. Some spent a year on the road, sleeping in ditches, woods, churchyards, on sandy beaches, or camping at Big Sur. Young hippie women were especially vulnerable because the men who picked them up in their vehicles were often sexually aggressive. Hitchhiking became so central to the Los Angeles scene that 300 hippies invaded City Hall to protest a proposal outlawing hitchhiking by juveniles.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ “Callin’ All Freecommunards,” *Free Press of Louisville*, 14 September 1970; “Tripping Down Hippie Highway,” *Newsweek*, 27 July 1970, 22; Steven V. Roberts, “Youth Seeking Freedom on the Road,” *New York Times*, 15 July 1971, pp. 33, 51; Erwin Baker, “300 Shouting Hippies Protest Hitchhiking Ban,” *Los Angeles Times*, 15 October 1970, p. C1.

Other hippies did not limit their travels to America. In the late 1960s and continuing into the early 1970s, freaks toured the world. Many attempted to escape the frantic pace and degenerate values of the West. Cheap and abundant dope provided another incentive, while others endeavored to live the simple life and find themselves. Living cheaply appealed to the hippies' anti-materialism.

Dropouts roamed Europe. American "knapsack nomads" joined millions of their European counterparts in "wandering far and wide from Hammerfest to Gibraltar—and points even farther out." "Maybe I'll go to Switzerland. Or maybe Spain. Anyplace with lots of young people. Just follow the crowds," a 23-year-old seeker told *Time*. Young Vietnam Veterans also traveled the world, enjoying the good life, while trying to discover themselves. "When I was in the jungle, I vowed that if I ever got out alive, I'd spend a long time in Europe—drinking the local brand and making it with all the chicks until I got my fill. Then I'd return home and do something constructive," a vet confessed. "I still haven't any notion of what I should do back home, or even who I really am." Hippies traveling Europe lived cheaply, taking free meals from friendly adults or eating at university cafeterias, staying at inexpensive youth hostels, hitchhiking, and traveling second class on trains. The British Student Travel Center and other youth organizations offered especially affordable plane tickets to full-time college and high school students.⁷⁷

Thousands flew into Amsterdam—"the hippie capital of the world." Police rarely, if ever, enforced drug laws and nightclubs openly sold low-grade hashish. Freaks

⁷⁷ "The Knapsack Nomads," *Time*, 19 July 1971, 66-67.

“did their own thing” in private booths. Seekers in Rome hung out the Spanish Steps, eating stale bread, strumming guitars, smoking pot. In Copenhagen, longhairs enjoyed open-air theater productions, orchestra recitals, and free rock concerts. Dropouts stayed at hostels and “youth cities,” which consisted of cots and army tents. American seekers also made their way to Paris, London, Bonn, and Zurich.⁷⁸

Beyond Europe, seekers journeyed to India. In 1969, over 10,000 American and European longhairs lived there, mostly in Bombay. Some traveled to the foothills of the Himalayas, some moved into the hinterlands to live among the peasantry, while others frolicked in the surf and sand on the beaches of Goa, or studied meditation with a guru.⁷⁹

Thousands traveled to the Katmandu Valley in Nepal, high up in the Himalayas. Cheap, legal, and abundant dope attracted many, but so did the beautiful scenery and solace from frantic daily life in America. “Here we breathe freely, away from the poisonous air of modern materialistic civilization which has made a mess of life in the West,” a hip woman told a newsperson. Hippies loved the simple living in Nepal, passing the days relaxing, meditating, smoking dope, painting, writing poems, and reading.⁸⁰

Freaks found Southeast Asia particularly attractive. International hitchhikers settled in Thailand and Vientiane, the capital of Laos, where they lived in cheap hotels,

⁷⁸“Youth Unrest—What Worldwide Survey Shows,” *U.S. News & World Report*, 26 October 1970, 76; “Knapsack Nomads,” 66-67.

⁷⁹“Hippies Find India Is Not So ‘Groovy,’” *New York Times*, 2 January 1972, p. 4.

⁸⁰Dale D. Morsch, “Hippies Invade Himalayas,” *Dallas Morning News*, 20 November 1967, p. 4; Richard Horn, “Letter From Kathmandu,” *East Village Other* (New York), 4 October 1968.

basked in the sun, swam in the Mekong River, and easily purchased marijuana, hashish, and opium. Hip visitors also came to journey's end in Indonesia and Malaysia.⁸¹

Seekers also visited or lived in the Middle-East and Africa. Hundreds found Kabul, Afghanistan, with its legal, high quality, and cheap hashish, enticing. Hippies also paid little for housing and food, which was another draw. In addition to Afghanistan, longhairs traveled to Lebanon, Turkey, and the bush country of Kenya.⁸²

Closer to home, freaks traveled to Mexico. Hippies loved its picturesque beaches, bright sun, bustling cities, open roads, and small villages. Thousands of men and women crossed the border, hitchhiking around the country with everything they owned on their backs.⁸³

Foreigner officials often treated hippie invaders harshly. Mexican authorities deported or jailed them, confiscating their vehicles, shaving their hair and beards. Many were arrested on marijuana charges. College students spent months in jails sleeping on cold cement floors. Kenya officials threatened to turn back Americans, Canadians, and Britons with "long, shaggy, unkempt hair." General Prapas Charusathien, Thailand's interior minister, "asked the foreign office to instruct its embassies to refuse visas to the flower children." Malaysian government officials instructed Malaysia-Singapore Airlines to deny service to anyone with "Beatle-type hairdos or hippie clothes." Many

⁸¹ "Thailand Places Official Ban On Admitting Flower Children," *Dallas Morning News*, 11 May 1968, p. 2; Charles Mohr, "Hippies Find Laos A Tolerant Haven" *New York Times*, 19 October 1967, p. 7; Lee Elbinger, "Hitch-Hiking in Laos," *Fifth Estate* (Detroit), 28 November – 11 December 1968; "Hippies in Indonesia," *Washington Post*, 25 October 1967, p. D15; "Airline Told To Keep Hippies Off Planes," *Los Angeles Times*, 8 September 1968, p. 13.

⁸² Sydney H. Schanberg, "U.S. Envoy Scores Hippies in Kabul," *New York Times*, 16 November 1969, p. 8.

⁸³ Dial Torgerson, "Mexico's Harsh Message: Hippies Not Wanted," *Los Angeles Times*, 30 March 1969, p. A1; "Mexico Cuts Invasion by U.S. Hippies," *Chicago Tribune*, 26 March 1970, p. 18.

of the native Nepalese disliked hippies, especially restaurant and hotel owners who lost money when indigents could not afford to pay for their meals and lodging. Indian police and civic officials charged the hippies with exerting a bad influence on Indian youths and conservative and religious Indians found nude and semi-nude hippies repulsive. By 1972, the number of dropouts shrank to 4,000 when the Indian government issued fewer new visas and extended fewer older ones. In 1971, over 700 Americans sat in jails overseas for drug possession and drug dealing.⁸⁴

At the same time hippies traversed the world, crisscrossed the country hitchhiking, and marched in the last major anti-war demonstrations, the desire to build their own society reached its pinnacle. In the early 1970s, the counterculture's audacious social experiment of constructing a new society never came closer to being fully realized. The counterculture was a genuine counter to Cold War culture, producing its own values, music, art, literature, language, and clothing, but, in the early 1970s, it also became a countersociety, as hippies created alternative institutions. Cultural activism exploded as activists, former activists, and hippies—together—channeled their efforts into constructive action, creating counter institutions. As the dissident youth culture and countersociety spoke of the New Age and the New America, it established co-ops, hip businesses, headshops, free stores, free universities, free clinics, legal services, "churches," underground newspapers, radio stations, community switchboards, and shelters for street people and runaways, in unprecedented numbers. Longhairs, immersed in hippie enclaves, completely evaded majority society; indeed, when freaks

⁸⁴ "Kenya to Ban Hippies," *New York Times*, 12 March 1972, p. 19; See footnotes 81-87.

resided in a bustling hip community, they “almost lived in another country, an alternative America, filled with people of similar commitments and affinities.” “People are goal oriented now,” observed Max Scherr, publisher of the *Berkeley Barb*. “They are trying to make a structured society of their own. They came here looking for a revolution and now they’ve found one—they don’t have to go out on the street anymore.” John Sinclair, jailed in 1969 and released in 1971, testified to the counterculture’s unparalleled growth while he sat in prison. He also found the exceptional surge in cultural activism astonishing:

Everything looks so beautiful out here—freaks are everywhere! I’ve never seen so many freaks before in my life! . . . for me it’s like coming out into a whole different world from the one I left in 1969, a world where all the stuff we were talking about and trying to bring about has all come true and now there are thousands and thousands of brothers and sisters sitting around waiting for something to happen . . . ready to support any kind of programs and projects that are brought forth to deal with the people’s needs. There’s so many of us that we can do goddamn near anything we set out to do now, and it’s really blowing my mind!⁸⁵

Students began turning to issues that immediately affected them, calling for rent controls, more daycare centers, and more campus parking lots. Those who lived off campus joined tenant’s unions to fight high rent rates and agitate for better living conditions. Others undertook projects that produced instant results. At Kent State, students built benches and planted gardens on campus. Improving community and

⁸⁵ Doug Rossinow, “Letting Go: Revisiting the New Left’s Demise,” in *The New Left Revisited*, ed. McMillian and Buhle, 244; “Telegraph Avenue’s Flower Children Have Gone Underground,” *New York Times*, 27 March 1971, p. 26; Sinclair, *Guitar Army*, 318.

humanity motivated students and an estimated 25,000 lent a hand to community volunteer projects.⁸⁶

Hippies opened co-ops. They first appeared around 1970 and freaks initially called them “food conspiracies.” Over the next decade, according to the Cooperative League of the U.S.A. (CLUSA), counterculturalists established between five and ten thousand co-ops. By the late seventies, such stores sold more than a half billion dollars’ worth of food per year. Co-ops appealed to hippies because they boosted the sense of community. Co-ops served the common good and “the people” owned and operated them. “The concept of the cooperative is really together,” asserted the *Big Muddy Gazette*, an Illinois underground. “It means what the title says—co-operation, community, coming together to meet our needs, being sure that the basic needs of our brothers and sisters are met. It’s just a beginning . . .” Longhairs also disliked giving their money to corporate grocery stores and enriching stockholders, so co-ops appealed to their anti-materialist, anti-big business sensibilities: “We feel that food is a basic right and that it shouldn’t be sold for profit.” Co-ops also cut prices. Individuals pooled their often scarce resources together to purchase goods in bulk directly from distributors, farmers, or wholesalers at a cheaper cost than that of well-established chain stores. Moreover, co-ops functioned as meeting places for hip communities, and finally, co-ops stocked the shelves with products hippies desired—wholesome, nutritious goods—not highly processed, synthetic foods. Co-ops proliferated in hippie enclaves all over the country “from Louisville to New York City, from Chicago to rural Maine, from Austin

⁸⁶ Nolte, “Students Turn Off War Protests,” p. 2.

to the Puget Sound.” The counterculture operated Dallas Food Co-Op in Texas, North Country Co-Op in the Twin Cities, Common Market in Denver, Aquarius Food in New York City, Bethesda Community Food Store near Washington, D.C., New Haven Co-op in Connecticut, Our Store in Fresno, California, People’s Food in Lincoln, Nebraska, Common Market Food Conspiracy in Madison, Wisconsin, and Serve the People in St. Louis.⁸⁷

The counterculture also founded non-food related co-ops. In Atlanta, hippies organized The Laundromat, a crafts cooperative. In Jackson, Mississippi, amateur and professional photographers set up the Pearl River Photography Cooperative. The organization did developing and printing at reduced rates and pooled their resources together to purchase equipment. They also planned to share a cooperative dark room. Counterculturalists also established clothing co-ops in several cities.⁸⁸

Hip businesses multiplied. Youths purchased numerous items from such shops: shirts, bellbottoms, military surplus, belts, tie-dye, leather products, jewelry, candles, posters, and incense. Hip entrepreneurs also opened up record and bookstores, and craftshops that sold hand-made goods and art. Dropouts clogged the checkout lines of non-hippie businesses, too, especially second-hand clothing shops like the Salvation Army and Goodwill Industries. Hippies patronized the General Store in Omaha,

⁸⁷ Daniel Zwerdling, “The Uncertain Revival of Food Cooperatives,” in *Co-ops, Communes & Collectives: Experiments in Social Change in the 1960s and 1970s*, ed. John Case and Rosemary C.R. Taylor (New York, 1979), 89-91; Harvey Davis, Jr., “Food Coop Grows,” *Dallas News*, 12 August 1970; “Food Co-Op,” *Big Muddy Gazette* (Carbondale, IL), 1970; “Co-op,” *Head Lines* (Memphis), Vol. 1, No. 2 (1973); “Food Co-ops,” *New York City Star*, October 1973; “People Food Co-op,” *Lincoln Gazette*, 12 September 1972; “Food Co-ops,” *Outlaw* (St. Louis), 10-30 March 1972; see also Craig Cox, *Storefront Revolution: Food Co-ops and the Counterculture* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1994).

⁸⁸ See *Great Speckled Bird* (Atlanta), 11 January 1971; “Photography Cooperative,” *Kudzu* (Jackson, MS), March 1970.

Nebraska, the Strawberry Patch in New Brunswick, New Jersey, Heart Shop in Wausau, Wisconsin, and the Thread Shed in Rapid City, South Dakota.⁸⁹

Hippies opened “headshops,” which flourished in the early 1970s and became some of the most successful counterculture businesses. Dropouts purchased incense, beads, posters, underground newspapers, and bongos, pipes, and rolling papers for smoking marijuana and hashish. Dopers browsed The Flower Factory and the Third Eye in Los Angeles, the Entrepreneur and Headland in Chicago, Pipefitter in Madison, The Trance in Columbia, Missouri, the Head Shed in Worcester, Massachusetts, and Strawberry Fields in Lawrence, Kansas.

Hip entrepreneurs affixed their social values to t-shirts, buttons, and posters, marketing and selling them. Hippies bought “Fuck the Draft” posters and buttons that read “Peace Now” and “Majority For A Silent Agnew.” Jesus Freaks especially liked day-glo buttons with religious messages—“Truckin with Jesus,” and “No ‘jive’ Jesus is Alive.”⁹⁰

Most hip enclaves organized switchboards, which served local communities, locating housing, crashpads, communes, and food for transients, and finding rides for travelers. Switchboards depended on volunteers to offer their homes as temporary quarters for people passing through. These community services also notified runaways

⁸⁹ See *Omaha Kaleidoscope*, 10 February 1970; “Craftspeople,” *Spare Change* (Washington, D.C.), 27 February 1971; Ad in *All You Can Eat* (New Brunswick, NJ), 1 April 1972; Ad in *Peach* (Wausau, WI), 3 January 1972; Ad in *Black Hills Free Press* (Rapid City, SD), January-February 1972.

⁹⁰ Terry H. Anderson, “The New American Revolution: The Movement and Business” in *The Sixties*, ed. Farber, 193-194.

if their parents had left messages for them. Drifters and dropouts benefited from switchboards in Berkeley, Austin, Houston, Eugene, Oregon, and Washington, D.C.⁹¹

Free clinics mushroomed. In 1972, more than 340 were in operation. Hippies valued free clinics because they served the health care needs of the community and they provided services free of charge, a major benefit to hippies lacking “bread” or “dough.” Supporters of free clinics felt that all humans had a “right” to health care at all times. Moreover, health professionals and patients—the community—controlled such institutions, an arrangement the counterculture cherished. Doctors and other professionals staffed these non-profit establishments and treated a wide variety of ailments: bumper drug trips, drug addiction, hepatitis, sexually transmitted diseases, and malnutrition. Some clinics also provided free medication, while others offered counseling on birth control, pregnancy, and venereal disease. Free clinics were vulnerable as they depended on outside resources for drugs, equipment, and access to hospitals. And because free clinics treated social pariahs, they often avoided social workers, police, and organized medicine. Dropouts took advantage of free clinics in Berkeley, Nashville, Austin, and Carbondale, Illinois, and hundreds of other locations.⁹²

Free stores also spread. Such establishments relied on donations and dropouts acquired various items at them—shirts, trousers, shoes, blankets, and furniture. Free

⁹¹ “Austin Echoes,” *Glyptodon News* (Austin), 19 March – 2 April 1973; “People News,” *Berkeley Tribe*, 11-18 September 1970; Dennis Fitzgerald, “Survive To Struggle,” *Space City!* (Houston), 19 September – 3 October 1970; “Crashes,” *Spare Change* (Washington, D.C.), 27 February 1971; “Switchboard,” *Augur* (Eugene, OR), 6-20 January 1972.

⁹² Rosemary C. R. Taylor, “Free Medicine,” in *Co-ops, Communes & Collectives*, ed. John Case and Rosemary C.R. Taylor, 20-22; “Free Clinic,” *Big Muddy Gazette* (Carbondale, IL), 1970; “Community Services,” *Berkeley Tribe*, 13-20 March 1970; “Free Clinics’ Funding In,” *Berkeley Barb*, 7-13 April 1972; “To Be Healthy is To Be Free,” *Nashville Rag*, November 1972; See *Rag* (Austin), 6 March 1972.

stores opened in Seattle, Detroit, and Madison. In addition to free stores, some communities benefited from free food programs. The University Lutheran Chapel in Berkeley fed 200 people a night. Legal aid services for the hip also proliferated in Illinois and Massachusetts.⁹³

Hard drugs became such a pressing problem in the early seventies that some hippies actively campaigned against them. In Nashville, Bill Dawson, coordinator the of Human Improvement Project—HIP—and 36 others, many of them former addicts, spoke out against hard drug use and dangerous narcotics. The organization did not attempt to dissuade marijuana use, as they did not consider grass a drug. HIP set up centers and a 24-hour hotline for drug users and runaways in Atlanta and Memphis.⁹⁴

Detroit's Open City consolidated several institutions into one community service organization. Open City helped tens of thousands—perhaps hundreds of thousands of people—throughout its existence. It operated a 24-hour switchboard that handled 5,000 calls per month, providing entertainment information, while assisting suicidal callers and victims of disastrous drug trips. In addition to a switchboard, Open City ran a free store, a free clinic that aided thousands, a food co-op, and counseling service. Crossroads in Rapid City, South Dakota served a similar purpose, assisting people who had taken bad doses of LSD, offering a referral service for legal aid and birth control, while furnishing

⁹³ "Survival," *Helix* (Seattle), Vol. 11, No. 13 (1970); "People News," *Berkeley Tribe*, 11-18 September 1970; Newsletter, *Street Sheet* (Madison), 1972, Social Action Vertical File, Box 60, Wisconsin Historical Society Library, University of Wisconsin, Madison; Anthony P. Sager, "Radical Law" in Case and Taylor, eds., *Co-ops, Communes, and Collectives*.

⁹⁴ "Hippie-Type Crusade Battles Drug Scene," *Los Angeles Times*, 10 June 1970, p. 16.

food and crashpads.⁹⁵

The counterculture continued to establish Free Universities. Hippies and college radicals could attend classes at a “Free U” in most major and mid-sized cities and scores of college towns. The average alternative university offered instruction in political and cultural radicalism and doctoral candidates and radical faculty members usually taught the courses. Most of these schools had an ephemeral existence, typically lasting a year or two. Students received no credit, but this did not matter as increasing one’s knowledge constituted the objective, not a degree. Free Universities represented more than a counter-institution, as they were dedicated to a larger and weightier enterprise. The Mid-Peninsula Free University in Palo Alto, California, for example, proclaimed that its goal was to “implement a vision of cultural revolution in which a new society might develop within the shell of the old.” At the Free University of Seattle, rebellious students enrolled in such classes as “The Art of Sexual Love,” “Fundamentals of Astrology,” “Compulsory Military Service and the Draft Act,” and “Neo-Colonialism and Revolution in Asia, Africa, and Latin America,” while at the Free University of New York, interested youth took the “Sexual Revolution,” and “Hallucinogenic Drugs.”⁹⁶

In addition to free universities, hippies formed “churches.” Earlier, Art Kleps—Chief Boo-Hoo—had founded the Neo-American Church, which employed LSD as a religious sacrament. Jefferson Poland, co-founder of the Sexual Freedom League, organized a similar institution in Berkeley: the Psychedelic Venus Church. The church

⁹⁵ “Save Open City – A Service or a Rip-Off?” *Fifth Estate* (Detroit), 10-23 December 1970; “Crossroads,” *Black Hills Free Press* (Rapid City, SD), January-February 1972.

⁹⁶ Unger, *The Sixties*, 178-179.

engaged in a ritual that involved marijuana, massage, and group sex. A typical “evening of worship and fellowship” proceeded in four stages—“blind meditation and touch,” followed by “nude group sensitivity encounter,” “cannabis communion with OM chanting,” and “church social.” Church members worshipped Aphrodite as a “symbol of hedonic pleasure” and believed that the goddess watched over their orgies. The organization also planned a “nude rock dance” as well as “an experiment in sado-masochism.”⁹⁷

Freaks counted at least one authentic church among their allies. Two young ministers, Richard L. York and John Pairman “Jock” Brown, had established the Berkeley Free Church in 1967 and it thrived into the early 1970s. The ministers preached against the war in Vietnam and the church’s motto was “Celebrate life—off the world pig!” The Church aided the street community; hundreds of teenagers slept in York’s home on a nightly basis during the Summer of Love and he always left his door unlocked. York and Brown adapted “Episcopalian practices to hippie needs,” staging outdoor communions complete with incense, candles, incantations, body paint, and rock music. The two ministers also founded a free dining room. Despite being devoted to liberation theology, the church was concerned more with form than doctrinaire Christianity.⁹⁸

While urban counterculturalists struggled to create the new society in cities, hippie communards did the same in the countryside. The early 1970s marked an

⁹⁷ Allyn, *Make Love, Not War*, 242; Bulletin, January 1970, Box 3, Folder 32; Letter to Berkeley Tribe, November 1969, Box 3, Folder 31; Bulletin, The Psychedelic Venus Church Invites You To Our Celebration, July 1970, Box 3, Folder 32; all from Sexual Freedom League Papers, BANC MSS 83/181 c, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

⁹⁸ Rorabaugh, *Berkeley At War*, 152.

extraordinary increase in the number of rural and urban collectives; in fact, the surge in commune building during this era “dwarfed what had gone before.”⁹⁹

Communards articulated their desire to build the new society. “Our purpose is to set up and maintain a society aimed at and operated for the benefit of its citizens,” Twin Oaks stated forthrightly, “to create a culture which produces happy and useful people, who cooperate with one another for the general good and who deal with problems in a peaceful and rational way.” Bruce Taub of the Earthworks commune in Franklin, Vermont, aspired “to help create a society that would provide an alternative to the despair and destruction we were experiencing in our culture, our country and our environment.” Fashioning a new society, in fact, was such a general intention, that one network of communes took the name Movement for a New Society.¹⁰⁰

Furthermore, rural hippies took an active role in hastening the “revolution.” The residents of Twin Oaks, for instance, “lived as though the revolution were over” and urged others to “Go ahead and start building revolutionary societies.” While political radicals spoke of overthrowing America as an imperialist power, Twin Oaks’s members advocated “building small-scale alternatives now” instead of “trying to tear down the present power structure.” Ron Thelin, a former Haight-Ashbury luminary who resided in a commune in Northern California in 1971, communicated the same sentiment: “We have won the revolution—and it continues.”¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Miller, *60s Communes*, 67.

¹⁰⁰ Pamphlet, Twin Oaks, 1973, David L. Rice Library, University of Southern Indiana, Evansville; Taub quoted in Miller, *60s Communes*, 151; MNS in Miller, *60s Communes*, 129-130.

¹⁰¹ Pamphlet, *The Revolution is Over: We Won!*, 1969, and Booklet, *Journal of a Walden Two Commune: The Collected Leaves of Twin Oaks Vol. 1* (Yellow Springs, OH, 1972), 39, David L. Rice

Constructing the new society and precipitating or living the revolution, of course, represented the hippies' grandest ideals. More practically, communards initiated their experiments because they rejected the dominant order, idealized rural surroundings, advocated open land, and aimed to put the principles of egalitarianism, warm community, and environmentalism into action.¹⁰²

The Farm, probably more than any other single commune, exemplified the spirit of back-to-the-land living. The idea for the Farm originated in Haight-Ashbury. Ego-denying hippies dedicated to egalitarianism founded the commune near Summertown, Tennessee in 1971, and by September 1973, 600 people lived on the 1,750 acre collective. The Farm's members called themselves a "Church," and they sought "to live a spiritual life." The commune's faith pulled from all the world's major religious traditions. The Farm's residents, though few of them had had any experience as farmers, endeavored to attain self-sufficiency, growing most of what they ate. Countercultural attributes abounded at the commune. Many members practiced vegetarianism. The Tennessee hippies also aided thousands of dropouts who turned up at the gates. They lived in poverty voluntarily, while dedicating themselves to helping the Third World's poor. Rock and roll was the Farm's "church music," and the Farm Band toured the country, playing 41 cities for free. The communards used psychedelics and smoked marijuana as they considered getting high an "essential implement in their spiritual toolbox." The Farm had a medical staff that furnished first aid services to its members

Library, University of Southern Indiana, Evansville; Robert Strand, "'67 Flower Children Lose Ardor," *Los Angeles Times*, 14 December 1971, p. B4.

¹⁰² Miller, *60s Communes*, 151-158.

and operated its own school. The community's midwives delivered babies "all natural." For the Farm's residents, births, like marriage, represented a "sacrament."¹⁰³

Most communities consisted of a few houses, a barn, and a communal house. Communards pooled their resources in the service of the common good; intentional communities shared everything—money, food, labor, expenses, shelter—and their members felt responsible for the needs of the entire community. Some collectives provided on-site medical care and education and reared children communally. Income came from a variety of sources. The Farm sent farming and construction crews out to work for pay. Others performed odd jobs or accepted money from friends or relatives. Many communities operated their own businesses. Hammock industries, for example, largely sustained East Wind and Twin Oaks. Some collectives took government benefits such as food stamps and welfare. Although this practice was broadcast in the Establishment press, it actually was highly controversial in the counterculture since many loathed the idea of entanglement with the corrupt government.¹⁰⁴

Hippies put their values into practice in most communes. Finding oneself, attaining "self-actualization, fulfillment and wholeness of identity in all facets of existence" constituted a fundamental objective. Two premier values included love and community; the Aquarians in rural Southern Illinois exemplified these sentiments with their motto, "Find love in yourselves then share it with others." Like the Aquarians, the Farm's residents made a point of practicing "loving kindness and brotherhood." The

¹⁰³ The Farm Report, September 1973 and 1971, Center for Communal Studies, University of Southern Indiana, Evansville; Miller, *60s Communes*, 118.

¹⁰⁴ Brochure, *What Is East Wind?*, 1976, David L. Rice Library, University of Southern Indiana, Evansville; Miller, *60s Communes*, 160-164.

Farm's founder, Stephen Gaskin, wrote in a newsletter, "I really love you and I really love God and I really love this universe." Gaskin glorified freedom, too, calling "free will" a "God-like thing." Springtree commune in Virginia valued natural foods, free schooling, and permissive childrearing. Because communards took environmentalism seriously, most intentional communities committed themselves to living harmoniously with nature. Communards saw the environment as a precious resource worthy of protection and preservation. Non-competition and non-violence numbered among common values. Communards also held egalitarianism in the highest regard. East Wind in Tecumseh, Missouri, called itself "an egalitarian society." By egalitarian, the commune's members meant "equal opportunity for people to develop skills, speak their mind, and grow in desired directions." Some communes sought to purge possessiveness and self-centeredness.¹⁰⁵

When not working, communards indulged in a variety of activities. Many did yoga, studied astrology, and meditated, while others made pottery. As many back-to-the-land hippies played guitars and other instruments, collectives passed their leisure hours engaged in community sing-a-longs.¹⁰⁶

As the counterculture burgeoned stateside, it also grew overseas—in Vietnam. Hippiedom infiltrated the military during the early 1970s. Some soldiers wore love beads and peace symbols and strummed guitars, while some black troops grew Afros.

¹⁰⁵ Document, Preliminary General Plan for Harvest Hills, September 1970; Liz Williams, "Aquarians Working Together," *The Evansville Courier*, 24 August 1970; Springtree Newsletter, April 1972; Brochure, *What Is East Wind?*, 1976; Flyer, *We Can Envision A New Society*; all from David L. Rice Library, University of Southern Indiana, Evansville; *The Farm Report*, September 1973, Center for Communal Studies, University of Southern Indiana, Evansville.

¹⁰⁶ Liz Williams, "Aquarians Working Together," *The Evansville Courier*, 24 August 1970, David L. Rice Library, University of Southern Indiana, Evansville.

Servicemen began reading undergrounds like Detroit's *Fifth Estate* and sent letters to the paper. "This company is another 'Mash,'" wrote a soldier, "everyone gets down heavy here, even the officers, but they are young and can dig the scene. If you have any freaky posters we could really dig it for our club." A pot subculture developed among American GIs. *Newsweek* cited a study conducted by an Army psychologist that stated 35 percent of troops smoked pot. The study also disclosed that the highest rates of use occurred in units where the men came from large cities like New York City or San Francisco. GIs obtained grass without trouble as cannabis grew naturally over much of the country and because Vietnamese peddlers regularly sold it to troops. According to the press, soldiers could get marijuana in Vietnam more easily than college students at metropolitan campuses in the States. Despite increased busts by Military Police and a psychological operations program (psyops) to dissuade marijuana's use, troops continued smoking. The heads in Nam, like the hippies back home, championed the slogan, "Dope is hope."¹⁰⁷

The counterculture also welcomed Vietnam veterans to its ranks. Alienated veterans returning to "the world" experienced discrimination when they converted to the counterculture. "I tried to get a job after I was discharged from the marines," one man divulged to an underground. But his prospective employer told him, "Your hair's too long, you can't work here. You must be one of those communist hippies who hate this

¹⁰⁷ "Letters," *Fifth Estate* (Detroit), 10-23 December 1970; "In Vietnam: Mama-San Pushers Vs. Psyops," *Newsweek*, 21 April 1969, 108.

country.” “I’ll tell you something,” parried the veteran, “I love this country more than you think. I just hate most of the people in it.”¹⁰⁸

The advent of the Jesus Freaks, or street Christians as many preferred to be called, marked another addition to, and significant development within, the counterculture. The Jesus Freaks, who combined conservative religion with rebellious counterculture, lived in about six cities, including San Francisco, Atlanta, and Los Angeles. Many had forsaken dope and drugs—acid, heroin, mescaline, and speed—to become dedicated evangelical Christians preaching their “love for Jesus.” Others had originally investigated Eastern religions before wandering back to Christianity. “Lots of youths are freaked out on drugs or meditation or Zen,” a Jesus Person told a journalist. “We’ve been through that and found it wasn’t satisfying. Now we’re freaked out on Jesus.” Some found the image of Jesus the rebel, the martyr for peace and brotherhood, attractive, yet most sought an intense, personal relationship with Christ, who they worshipped as the ultimate Savoir, Judge, and ruler of their destinies.¹⁰⁹

Jesus People, of course, abandoned drugs and forbade sex outside of marriage. Yet, in other respects, they remained hippies through and through. When not communicating about Christ, most talked hip lingo. They donned second-hand clothes, granny dresses, blue jeans, army surplus, and sported long hair. On the Sunset Strip in Los Angeles, police had difficulty distinguishing the “pushers from the priests.” Jesus Freaks shared with early Christians the belief that Doomsday might arrive at anytime

¹⁰⁸ Speak Out,” *Rebirth* (Phoenix), Vol. 1, No. 6 (1969).

¹⁰⁹ Phil Tracy, “The Jesus Freaks: Savagery and Salvation On Sunset Strip,” *Commonweal*, 30 October 1970, 122-125; “The New Rebel Cry: Jesus Is Coming!” *Time*, 21 June 1971, 56; Jesus Person in Edward B. Fiske, “New Youth Groups ‘Freaked Out’ on Jesus,” *Chicago Tribune*, 22 February 1970, p. 64.

and walked the streets looking to make converts for Christ. “If you ain’t saved by the blood of Jesus, man, forget it. You’re damned to the pits of hell,” said one bearded street Christian to a passerby. “You don’t need no pills,” proselytized Arthur Blessitt, “Jes’ drop a little Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Christ is the ultimate, eternal trip.”¹¹⁰

Like other hippies, Jesus Freaks established their own communes—“Jesus Houses.” They founded more than 200 in California alone, while others were located in the Pacific Northwest, Chicago, Detroit, and other cities. Jesus People started their own underground papers, too; *Right On!* in Berkeley and the *Hollywood Free Paper* were among the largest in terms of circulation. Some famous musicians converted to the Jesus movement, including Johnny Cash, Eric Clapton, and Paul Stookey of Peter, Paul, and Mary. Jeremy Spencer of Fleetwood Mac joined the Children of God.¹¹¹

In addition to Jesus People, the counterculture added to its ranks an estimated half million runaway teenyboppers. These alienated kids ran away from “hassles”—parents, cops, and school. Hundreds of counterculture counseling services sprouted up across the country for the purpose of supporting runaways with drug addictions and family and personal problems. These houses offered legal advice, medical care, personal and group therapy to alienated teens, and a telephone so that they could contact their parents. Some runaways and street people used the houses for extended stays, while others treated them like crashpads, spending one night before moving on to another city. Project Place in Boston offered assistance and advice to 40 or 50 runaways a month.

¹¹⁰ Tracy, “The Jesus Freaks,” 122-125; “Street Christians: Jesus as the Ultimate Trip,” *Time*, 3 August 1970.

¹¹¹ “Street Christians: Jesus as the Ultimate Trip,” “The New Rebel Cry,” 61.

Similar establishments included Huckleberry House in San Francisco, Ozone House in Ann Arbor, Michigan, The Bridge in Atlanta, and Runaway House in Washington, D.C.¹¹²

In addition to teenage runaways, drifters augmented the counterculture's numbers. Thousands of young people—mostly non-students—migrated to universities all over the country to escape straight society and live cheaply. To be sure, there had been street communities before—2,000 to 4,000 dropouts had made their homes in Berkeley and Cambridge, Massachusetts. By 1971, however, drifters populated such places as the University of Kansas in Lawrence, and Isla Vista, a “youth ghetto” near the University of California, Santa Barbara. On the outskirts of campuses—Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley, Mifflin Street in Madison, Putnam Square near Harvard, and Morningside Heights in New York City—longhairs clad in beads, boots, headbands, tie-dyed shirts, and jeans, hung around and utilized alternative institutions—crashpads, free clinics, communes, and headshops. Young dropouts lived for the moment, wandering from campus to campus, selling underground newspapers and doing odd jobs for dough, dealing dope, panhandling, and sleeping in dorm rooms. Universities furnished environments—concerts, libraries, lectures, and arty shops—that attracted alienated ex-students and non-students.¹¹³

Rock festivals continued to be held throughout the early 1970s. The greatest festival calamity since Altamont occurred in the summer of 1971: the Celebration of

¹¹² Runaway estimate in “End of Youth Revolt?”, 27; Ann Blackman, “Youth Centers Set Up to Aid Social Outcasts,” *Los Angeles Times*, 6 December 1971, pp. C6, 7.

¹¹³ Robert Reinhold, “New Campus Problem: Young Drifters,” *New York Times*, 10 November 1970, pp. 1, 34.

Life. Held on the banks of Louisiana's Atchafalaya River, the promoters billed the Celebration of Life as "the resurrection of the rock festival." It was not to be. The Celebration of Life turned into a Lamentation of Death. The festival's location changed three times in a week and it was announced several times that the festival was canceled. It lasted only four days, though it was scheduled for eight. Four people drowned in the river, swept away by strong currents, while another person overdosed. From treetops, snipers shot at people along the water's edge. When the Celebration of Life ended, five people were dead, hundreds were in jail, and many were tending to injuries sustained by violent motorcycle gangs.¹¹⁴

Hippies appeared in the headlines less and less in 1972; however, the ZIPPIES—a breakaway faction of the Yippies led by Tom Forcade that considered Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin old and irrelevant—organized counterculture activities. They disrupted Democratic presidential candidate Ed Muskie in Wisconsin, released rats at the National Republican Women's Dinner in New York City, demonstrated at ABC in Chicago, demanding equal time for their candidate "the Rock," and held free concerts in Tampa and Austin. The Zippies also staged smoke-ins in New York City, Madison, and Boulder.¹¹⁵

In the summer, the counterculture made waves at the 1972 Democratic and Republican National Conventions in Miami Beach. During the Democratic Convention in July, about 500 protestors tried to storm the chain link fence surrounding the Hall.

¹¹⁴ Santelli, *Aquarius Rising*, 204-213.

¹¹⁵ Zippie leaflet, High!, 1972, Social Action Vertical File, Box 60, Wisconsin Historical Society Library, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

More protested the Republican Convention the following month. Disparate groups and individuals—hippies, zippies, yippies, Jesus Freaks, veterans, gays, anarchists, Maoists, and Miami Women’s Coalition—camped out in Flamingo Park. Some 3,000 people eventually congregated there. Counterculturalists smoked pot, took speed, and listened to rock bands. The Zippies planned several events: a “piss-in,” a flag burning, and a Free Marijuana rally complete with twenty foot joint. Demonstrators put up a “vomitorium” tent where visitors could “throw up periodically to demonstrate the depth of their feelings toward President Nixon.” On August 21, demonstrators executed a series of marches on the convention hall. Vietnam Veterans Against the War led one march; Zippies led another. Over 100 zippies raised a Vietcong flag at a local high school and declared the National Guard under arrest. A few guardsmen raised a clenched fist or waved a peace sign. Two days later, police arrested over 1,000 protestors who had tried to block Republican delegates out of the convention hall.¹¹⁶

While the dissident youth culture and countersociety met in Miami, hippies in Texas and the Southwest adopted an American Western style, wearing buckskin, leather boots, Indian moccasins and beads, bandanas, and slouched leather and felt hats. Michael Martin Murphy, an Austin club performer, wrote “Cosmic Cowboy,” a song that fused cowboy culture with hippiedom. The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band later recorded the tune live, and their version became the more well-known of the two. In the song, the

¹¹⁶ Richard M. Cohen and Myra MacPherson, “On Stage: Yiddish Mamas, Zippies, Jesus Freaks,” *Washington Post*, 11 July 1972, p. A10; Paul Valentine, “Friction Splinters Protesters’ Camp,” *Washington Post*, 21 August 1972, p. A3; Paul Valentine, “Protests Are Peaceful As Republicans Meet,” *Washington Post*, 22 August 1972, p. A8; Paul Valentine and William Chapman, “Disrupters Blocked By Police,” *Washington Post*, 24 August 1972, p. A1; Zippies in Anderson, *Movement and the Sixties*, 398.

Cosmic Cowboy seeks to put his “little pony in over-drive” to “head out West” and yearns for “skinny dippin’ and Lone Star [beer] sippin’ and steel guitars.”¹¹⁷

Austin, Texas, a relatively liberal university city, became the center of progressive country and the hippie cowboy scene. An alternative social, cultural, and musical environment developed around a warehouse turned music venue, the Armadillo World Headquarters. Longhairs and progressive country musicians made the music hall their own. Progressive country musicians tended to be liberal pot-smokers and closet rock and rollers who played loud and whose lyrics were considered taboo in country music circles, pertaining to such topics as despair and drugs—even homosexuality.¹¹⁸

Many hippies began to drift back to the realm of politics. The countercultural lifestyle typically, though not always, went hand in hand with political liberalism and Left politics. Those who became vegetarians, did yoga, used dope and drugs, opposed the war and draft, championed liberated sexuality, dug rock festivals, and lived in urban communes, commonly favored liberal social movements and liberal political causes, and if they voted, they cast their ballot for the Democratic Party. Counterculturalists supported workers and unions striking for better wages and better working conditions. They also backed amnesty for draft resisters and participated in grape and lettuce boycotts in support of the United Farm Workers of America. In 1972, anti-war activists, hippies, feminists, and environmentalists—champions of the “new politics”—lined up behind Democratic presidential candidate George McGovern who, at one point,

¹¹⁷ Michael Allen, “‘I Just Want to Be a Cosmic Cowboy,’” *Hippies, Cowboy Code, and the Culture of a Counterculture*, *Western Historical Quarterly* 36, no. 3 (Autumn 2005): 275-299.

¹¹⁸ Patrick Carr, “It’s So ‘Progressive’ in Texas,” *New York Times*, 22 July 1973, p. 97.

promised to end the war and bring the troops home in 90 days or less. Since the 1968 convention, women and minority delegates tripled and the number of delegates under 30 increased ten fold. The movement had captured the Democratic Party.¹¹⁹

Hippies, whom had always had a fascination with Native Americans, supported Indians and their political cause. In February 1973, approximately 300 members of the American Indian Movement occupied Wounded Knee, South Dakota, taking eleven hostages and barricading a church. The militants made several demands, calling for the immediate improvement of conditions on reservations, sovereignty over their own affairs, and government recognition of independent Indian nations. *Breakdown*, a Klamath Falls, Oregon, underground newspaper publicized the siege, asking its readers to provide money, food, and medical supplies for the resistance movement. “Our first Americans have been largely neglected, exploited, and lied to,” proclaimed a Sarasota, Florida, underground. “Treaties supposedly protecting their rights haven’t been worth the paper they have been written on.”¹²⁰

Hippies also fixated on presidential politics when Nixon became embroiled in a series of scandals—Watergate. Five of Nixon’s “plumbers” had been arrested after they attempted to break into the Democratic National Committee’s headquarters at the Watergate office complex in Washington. Nixon ordered a cover-up of the incident. Among other abuses of power, Nixon had directed the IRS and Justice Department to punish his foes and used counterintelligence operations against domestic dissidents.

¹¹⁹ “Strike Continues,” *Pure Corn* (Evansville, IN), December 1972; Tom Headly, “Lettuce Boycott,” *Lincoln Gazette*, 12 September 1972; also see *Joint Issue* (East Lansing, MI), 8 January 1973; Anderson, *Movement and the Sixties*, 394, 397.

¹²⁰ “Wounded Knee!” *Breakdown* (Klamath Falls, OR), 20-16 March 1973; Fred Duisberg, Jr., “An American Tragedy,” *Caravan* (Sarasota, FL), 17 May 1973.

Counterculturalists raged against Nixon. “The President must be impeached,” declared the Memphis underground, *Head Lines*. “He intends to function above the law. Our Bill of Rights is seriously threatened.”¹²¹

Despite the discomfiting news from Washington, the counterculture continued to revel at festivals. Texas hippies mingled with rednecks at Willie Nelson’s Fourth of July Picnic in Dripping Springs in 1973. Approximately 25,000 fans and partygoers came to the show. Many of the best progressive country artists performed: Willie Nelson, Waylon Jennings, Kris Kristofferson, Billy Joe Shaver, and John Prine. Cosmic cowboys and cowgirls openly smoked pot and pot-bellied sheriffs gazed at scantily-dressed hippie women.¹²²

At the same time, over 1,000 zippies held an all-day smoke-in on the Mall in Washington. As a rock band played, hundreds of joints were passed out, which zippies smoked openly. Police made no arrests. More than 500 zippies high on marijuana marched on the capitol and demanded the legalization of pot and the impeachment of President Nixon. “Pot law violations are not as destructive as some of the violations of law in the White House since Watergate,” commented organizer Mike Chance. At the capitol, zippies played in an ornamental pool, while others dismembered a Nixon mannequin.¹²³

The counterculture took its collective last breath on August 4, 1973. The Watkins Glen Summer Jam, held on a single day in New York, surpassed Woodstock’s

¹²¹ “Impeach the President,” *Head Lines* (Memphis), Vol. 1, No. 2 (1973).

¹²² Carr, “‘Progressive’ in Texas,” p. 97.

¹²³ Paul Valentine, “Pro-Pot, Anti-Nixon Rally,” *Washington Post*, 5 July 1973, p. E3.

attendance: 600,000 youth from across the nation came to hear three bands—the Grateful Dead, the Band, and the Allman Brothers. Cars jammed the two-lane highways leading to the festival grounds and some people had to walk twenty miles to get to the site. The festival’s promoters had planned well; the crowds enjoyed plenty of food, water, and portable toilets. Bathers swam in local ponds and both men and women strolled the grounds naked. Few people required medical evacuations. Festival-goers talked of peace and love, flashed the peace sign, and imbibed booze, beer, and Quaaludes in addition to marijuana. Campers named wooded areas “Hippie Highway” and “Big Pink.”¹²⁴

Some saw the festival as an indication of the counterculture’s rejuvenation. “It’s a return to Woodstock Nation,” commented Bill Graham’s west coast publicist. “This country is turning around. Look at Watergate. Look at Watkins Glen. The hippies are once again winning.”¹²⁵

The festival, however, was not a return to Woodstock Nation, but a mass pilgrimage to find it and feel part of it once again. The Summer Jam, *Time* reported, “seemed somehow an atavism, more a class reunion than a happening, a nostalgic spectacle of youth in search of its youth.” The Jam’s participants were mostly the younger brothers and sisters of the people who had been at Woodstock. Despite the comparisons, the Summer Jam was not Woodstock, for Woodstock had symbolized the youth culture’s opposition to Vietnam and represented a challenge to the Establishment.

¹²⁴ “Woodstock Matured,” *Time*, 6 August 1973, 8; Judy Klemesrud, “Bigger Than Woodstock, But Was It Better?” *New York Times*, 5 August 1973, p. 97.

¹²⁵ Gregg Kilday, “Balkanizing the Woodstock Nation at Watkins Glen,” *Los Angeles Times*, 19 August 1973, p. O16.

Conversely, Watkins Glen “was positively somnolent,” according to one attendee. “It lacked political overtones. It possessed little countercultural vitality.” “So, what does it Really All Mean?” asked the *New York Times*. “Not much, this time. The social significance, I think, was left behind 160 miles to the east at the 1969 Woodstock festival. This time the kids just came to have fun, a great big stoned celebration in the world’s largest outdoor singles’ bar.”¹²⁶

The counterculture was fading. “Kids still come to Haight Street,” reported the *New York Times*. “Usually broke, carrying their meager belongings in dusty knapsacks, dressed in patchwork clothes, they seem like the last stragglers of a retreating army as they search for what is left of the free and easy street life.” Gregg Kilday of the *Los Angeles Times* speculated as to why the counterculture lost momentum: “The kids turned on now in grade school. Dope was cool. Sex was easy. Rock no longer threatened. No one was marching anymore.”¹²⁷

The commercialization of the counterculture facilitated its collapse: as it was subsumed into mass consumer culture, it ceased to be counter. Ultimately, capitalism could withstand and absorb cultural revolution, as it was so easily marketable. Mainstream and big businesses capitalized on the counterculture successfully. Pepsi ran a psychedelic advertisement featuring a flashing strobe light and a girl with a fluorescent flower painted on her face dancing to a rock band. AT&T used the slogan “The Times, They Are A-Changin’,” a car company proclaimed the “Dodge Rebellion,” and a

¹²⁶ “Woodstock Matured,” 8; Kilday, “Balkanizing the Woodstock Nation at Watkins Glen,” p.016; Klemesrud, “Bigger Than Woodstock, But Was It Better?,” p. 97.

¹²⁷ Radolf, “Haight Street,” p. 3; Kilday, “Balkanizing the Woodstock Nation at Watkins Glen,” p.016.

Columbia Records advertisement featured the line “If you won’t listen to your parents, The Man, or the Establishment, why should you listen to us.”¹²⁸

The counterculture also entered the mainstream through film and theater. *Hair*, *The American Tribal Love Rock Musical*, sold 20 million dollars worth of tickets. A critic called the musical “the youth culture Disneyfied, freaks with little white gloves.” It went mainstream on Broadway. On stage, actors and actresses appeared in the nude. The performers also took off their clothes in *Oh! Calcutta!*, which accumulated big profits. The counterculture, too, began to dominate the movies. A series of expensive films did poorly at the box office, while low-budget films did well. Peter Fonda made *Easy Rider* for a half million dollars, yet the film grossed many times that amount. Fonda’s film celebrated the countercultural lifestyle and values—dope, sex, physical mobility, brotherhood, freedom, and communal living. *The Graduate* and *Bonnie and Clyde* also became huge box office smashes that exuded countercultural themes. In *The Graduate*, Benjamin Braddock, played by Dustin Hoffman, is an alienated middle-class youth seeking to escape the artificiality of suburban life and a boring career—especially one in “plastics.” *Bonnie and Clyde* pitted two rebellious non-conformists against greedy, selfish, and manipulative lawmen and bankers.¹²⁹

Rock capitalists co-opted the counterculture’s language and marketed the counterculture back to youth. “The grown-ups are having the last laugh,” opined *Ramparts*. “Rock and roll is a lovely playground, and within it kids have more power than they have anywhere else in society, but the playground’s walls are carefully

¹²⁸ Frank, *The Conquest of Cool*, 16, 178.

¹²⁹ Craig Karpe, “Das Hip Kapital,” *Esquire*, December 1970, 185; O’Neill, *Coming Apart*, 220.

maintained and guarded by the corporate elite that set it up in the first place.” Rock had been a commercial enterprise from the beginning, an “American creation on the level of the hamburger or the billboard.” Record companies started capitalizing on anti-Establishment fervor in the late sixties. CBS began promoting some of its artists as “The Revolutionaries” as early as 1968. A Columbia advertisement featured the slogan “THE MAN CAN’T BUST OUR MUSIC.” The car company Opel promised that their new cars could “light your fire!,” a reference to the Doors song, and Jefferson Airplane did commercials for white Levis jeans.¹³⁰

By 1973, rock had become big business. It raked in two billion dollars a year—about the same amount that the sports and film industries made combined. Corporate rock made huge sales overseas, too, grossing over \$500 million in Japan, \$450 million in West Germany, and over \$440 million in the Soviet Union. And rock stars were also awash in cash; *Forbes* estimated that at least 50 artists earned between two and six million dollars per year. The music industry became a solid investment for Wall Street. Large music companies took over smaller ones. Huge non-music conglomerates bought properties in the music business. The music business was concentrated in a few companies. The top four record corporations sold over half of all records and tapes. Nearly 40 percent of the sales belonged to two companies alone, Warner Communications and CBS.¹³¹

The rock press, too, had become big business. Many counterculturalists denounced *Rolling Stone* as a capitalist scam, but Jann Wenner, the magazine’s founder,

¹³⁰ Garofalo, *Rockin’ Out*, 223; Michael Lydon, “Rock for Sale,” *Ramparts*, June 1969, 19-24.

¹³¹ Garofalo, *Rockin’ Out*, 220-222; Szatmary, *Rockin’ In Time*, 219-220.

did not waver. By 1971, he had fully embraced the term “capitalist.” *Rolling Stone*’s Third Street office cost \$7,000-a-month to rent. In 1972, Rolling Stone covered the McGovern-Nixon race, not radical politics. For Wenner, a solid economic footing for the magazine was more important than the political and cultural scene surrounding the music he loved. “As long as there are bills to pay, writers who want to earn a living by their craft, people who pay for their groceries, want to raise children and have their own homes,” he wrote in an editorial, “*Rolling Stone* will be a capitalistic operation.”¹³²

Mainstream Americans increasingly adopted the counterculture’s style and values and the more mainstream the counterculture became, the less counter it was. Businessmen smoked dope, suburbanites engaged in “swinging” and “wife swapping” and called it sexual revolution, and truckers and police grew long hair and sideburns. Adults and mainstream youth wore casual and hippie-like clothing. Abbie Hoffman and Andy Warhol became household names and chains of hip clothing stores materialized and flourished.¹³³

The counterculture’s immense popularity had caused it to peak; yet, this mainstreaming also led to its downfall. Many young people did not commit to living the hippie lifestyle for any prolonged period; recreational and weekend hippies soared. These individuals—many of whom had ample economic means—could, and did, fade back into the mainstream whenever they wanted to. “A \$200 round-trip ticket to London lets you be a part-time dropout,” commented a Cornell teaching assistant. “You can go

¹³² Garofalo, *Rockin’ Out*, 226-227; Jann Wenner, “A Letter From the Editor: On the Occasion of Our Fourth Anniversary Issue,” *Rolling Stone*, 11 November 1971, 34.

¹³³ “Radical Chic,” *Submarine Church Press* (1972); “The Cooling of America: Out of Tune and Lost in the Counterculture,” 16.

on the bum for the summer and still be back in time for classes. You can live a counterculture life-style and not really mean it at all. It's like they say, 'Scratch a hippie and you'll find a Porsche.'"¹³⁴

The counterculture became, for more and more young people, a fashion statement and a fad—long hair, bellbottoms, dope and drugs, easy sex. These individuals did not adhere to authentic hippie values, but went in search of a good time, a big party, another Woodstock. They eroded hippiedom, for the counterculture always entailed more than a style, more than long hair, dope, and three-day rock festivals. "You can't find God in a stained-glass window, or buy 'hip-ness' in a headshop," a New Jersey hippie admonished his "Brothers and Sisters." "Woodstock is not a place; it's a state of mind, a frame of reference, and most importantly, an attitude. It is not composed of things, or even people so much as the way those people treat each other. The more we tell ourselves that we can recreate it at the drop of a joint, the more it is going to stay hidden in the woods in which we try to find it. You don't find it in the hills, you bring it there." By 1973, fewer and fewer hip youth agreed.¹³⁵

Communes deteriorated and came apart. Noncontributing individuals overran communities with an open-door policy, overwhelming the hardworking idealists. Vandals and thieves caused communes to crumble despite the attempts by veterans to keep them afloat. Similar scenarios destroyed hundreds of intentional communities. Internal conflicts also caused failures. Some people never adjusted to living in close quarters among others. Character flaws, large and small, disrupted harmonious living

¹³⁴ "Knapsack Nomads," 67.

¹³⁵ "Letters," *All You Can Eat* (New Brunswick, NJ), 20 July 1970.

and brought communities down. Members left one by one until communes disintegrated. Others found themselves evicted from rented premises, and in some cases, outside pressure from authorities caused communities to fold.¹³⁶

American involvement in Vietnam ended. On January 27, 1973, North Vietnam and America signed a truce. The North Vietnamese agreed to release all American prisoners of war; in return, the U.S. arranged to pull its troops out of South Vietnam within 60 days. By spring, the war was over. The conflict that many kids saw as obscene, brutal, immoral, and atrocious, no longer disillusioned them. Furthermore, an all-volunteer military had replaced the draft, which had hung ominously over the heads of baby-boomer males. Two central alienating issues responsible for the counterculture's existence and expansion, then, no longer harassed America's youth.

Finally, there was an economic downturn. Great Society and astronomical military spending caused deficits, which weakened the dollar and led to inflation rates of 4.5 percent in 1971. Nixon imposed wage and price controls in an effort to slow rising inflation. When the president removed these measures, inflation skyrocketed to an unprecedented 8 percent, rising to nearly 10 percent by the end of 1973. After the Yom Kippur War, the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), enacted an oil embargo, cutting oil production by 25 percent, which amounted to a 10 percent cut in the world's oil supply. Cars waited in long lines at gas stations as motorists feared running out of fuel. In addition to the embargo, OPEC raised oil prices markedly. Gas prices almost doubled; home heating fuel prices shot as high as 33 percent. Industrial

¹³⁶ Miller, *60s Communes*, 225-227.

productivity stagnated, real income fell, and the standard of living dropped. Under these circumstances, it became more difficult to live on society's economic margins as baby-boomers searched for jobs at a time when unemployment was rising. Moreover, the sixties generation was aging; many hip youth decided to settle down, marry, attain stable jobs, and raise families.

Hippiedom's death was gradual. Freaks and dropouts continued to drift around campuses and hip urban neighborhoods and live communally through most of the 1970s. The counterculture's evolution and development had been, in the words of the Grateful Dead, "a long strange trip." What began as an isolated phenomenon limited to the coasts and large universities, involving tens of thousand cultural rebels in 1965, had evolved into a massive dissident youth culture and countersociety of millions in the 1970s. The hippies had failed to replace the dominant society with a new one. Their efforts, however, were not in vain, for the counterculture had bequeathed a powerful legacy—it transformed America.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION: LEGACY, EVALUATION, AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

“If you look back on the sixties and, on balance, you think there was more good than harm in it, you’re probably a Democrat, and if you think there was more harm than good, you’re probably a Republican.”— Bill Clinton¹

Who won the uncivil wars of the 1960s? A common interpretation maintains that conservatives won the political battle, while liberals won on the cultural front. No one won the wars.²

In fact, Americans are still fighting those uncivil wars today. The Sixties, and the counterculture, have cast a long shadow over the nation’s politics. Liberals generally see the 1960s as a good decade, a time of high idealism, optimism, and promise. They admire the Great Society for its attempts at combating poverty, improving health care, and providing educational opportunities for everyone. They also applaud the most crucial liberal achievement of the decade and perhaps the twentieth century: civil rights. Furthermore, liberals have a favorable opinion of the anti-war, women’s, and environmental movements. Finally, most liberals are pleased with the loosening of traditional social and cultural restraints.³

¹ Bernard von Bothmer, *Framing the Sixties: The Use and Abuse of a Decade from Ronald Reagan to George W. Bush* (Amherst, MA, 2010), 1.

² See Lytle, *America’s Uncivil Wars*, 375, and Morris Dickstein, “After Utopia: The 1960s Today,” in *Sights on the Sixties*, ed. Barbara L. Tischler (New Brunswick, NJ, 1992).

³ von Bothmer, *Framing the Sixties*, 221.

Conservatives, on the other hand, generally perceive the 1960s as a bad decade, a time when American values—self-reliance and discipline, personal responsibility, patriotism, and local communities—began to decline. While conservatives today praise John F. Kennedy’s presidency, they generally criticize the mid-to-late 1960s, assailing Lyndon Johnson’s costly war on poverty, the government’s intervention into state affairs on behalf of racial minorities, and spoiled New Leftists who cost America victory in Vietnam. Conservatives also regret other alleged consequences they ascribe to the sixties: drug abuse, crime, teen pregnancy, poverty, multi-culturalism, abortion, and homosexuality. Roger Kimball’s critical appraisal is typical. In 1997, Kimball wrote in *New Criterion*:

Make no mistake: the radical, emancipationist demands of the Sixties have not receded. They have—to an extent that is astonishing to contemplate—triumphed throughout society. They have insinuated themselves, disastrously, into the curricula of our schools and colleges; they have dramatically altered the texture of sexual relations and family life; they have played havoc with the authority of churches and other repositories of moral wisdom; they have undermined the claims of civic virtue and our national self-understanding; they have degraded the media and the entertainment industry, and subverted museums and other institutions entrusted with preserving and transmitting high culture. They have even, most poignantly, addled our hearts and innermost assumptions about what counts as the good life.⁴

Conservatives have been more successful than liberals in electoral politics and policymaking. While the Left lost energy and its numbers dissipated, conservatives assembled the best-financed and largest grassroots movement in the country by the late 1970s. Evangelical Protestants, businesspeople, and others helped boost Ronald Reagan,

⁴ von Bothmer, *Framing the Sixties*, 221; Roger Kimball, “Virtue Gone Mad,” *New Criterion* 16, December 1997: 4-11.

George Bush, Sr., and George W. Bush to the presidency. Although most Americans value the centerpieces of the New Deal, Great Society, and support other liberal causes—social security, Medicare, Medicaid, federal aid to education, and environmentalism—the Right has dominated the social and economic debate. It has become conventional wisdom in American politics that “antipoverty programs do not help the poor; taxes should always be lowered; ‘preferential treatment’ for minorities is wrong; business is overregulated; and the size of government ought to be reduced.”⁵

Conservatives, however, appear to be losing the culture. The counterculture transformed American culture—and thus America—and this is its legacy.

The aesthetic and stylistic changes of the Sixties have had a lasting impact. Personal liberty has increased as individuals have greater freedom to dress as they please, and socialize with whom they want. Longer hair for men has generally become acceptable everywhere, including the workplace. Most Americans wear informal clothing. Rock and roll is popular and mainstream. Even conservative politicians campaign in bluejeans. President George W. Bush spoke to the press in a windbreaker and Ronald Reagan played Bruce Springsteen’s “Born in the U.S.A.” on the campaign trail, which horrified the rocker.⁶

Sexual mores have become more relaxed. Frank public discussions and depictions of sex occur regularly in movies, literature, art, and television. Millions of couples live together before getting married. Interracial relationships and marriages

⁵ Isserman and Kazin, *America Divided*, 302-303.

⁶ Mark Oppenheimer, “The Sixties’ Surprising Legacy,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 3 October 2003, B11-B12.

have become more acceptable and people commonly marry across ethnic and religious lines. The Pill and a growing general permissiveness in the sexual attitudes of the larger culture allows women—and men—to enjoy more sexual freedom. A large majority believe premarital sex is socially acceptable; even 69 percent of those who attend church “nearly weekly” hold this view.⁷

Americans are more tolerant of the gay lifestyle. Millions of gays are open about their sexual identities. The government advanced their rights when the Supreme Court struck down a Texas anti-sodomy law in *Lawrence v. Texas* in 2003, and the Defense of Marriage Act in 2013. A Democratic congress also repealed “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” in 2010, allowing gays to serve openly in the military. In 2011, nearly two-thirds of Americans, according to Gallup, believed that same-sex relations between consenting adults should be legal and 56 percent found same-sex relationships to be “morally acceptable,” and 53 percent supported gay marriage.⁸

Attitudes towards drugs like Marijuana have loosened considerably. A 2002 Time/CNN poll revealed that 80 percent were fine with medical marijuana, while 72 percent felt that people caught for marijuana possession should get off lightly with a fine. Nearly half of all Americans—47 percent—had tried marijuana at least once. In November 2012, citizens of Colorado and Washington voted to legalize marijuana in

⁷ Lytle, *America’s Uncivil Wars*, 375; Gerald L. Zelizer, “Should Clergy Endorse ‘Living in Sin,’” *USA Today*, 24 July 2003, p. 13A.

⁸ “Same-Sex Relations Get Record-High Approval,” *Christian Century*, 28 June 2011, 16.

their states. A 2013 Pew Research Center study revealed that 52 percent support marijuana's legalization.⁹

Most conservatives see drug use as corrupting. Since the Nixon years, the federal government has waged a war on drugs. During the Reagan-Bush presidencies, drug users and dealers faced mandatory minimum sentences, asset forfeiture, and withholding of welfare benefits. Mounting public concern about drug abuse led many businesses to administer urine tests to employees and prospective employees.¹⁰

Questioning authority is another legacy of the counterculture. Americans became more skeptical and suspicious of the government, political leaders, and the military. People no longer accepted the word of authorities at face value; they asked questions and demanded explanations, especially when it came to issues such as war and peace, the environment, corruption, and individual rights. The press, too, asked questions it never would have prior to the sixties. After the Vietnam debacle, many Americans became skeptical and cynical of the nation's foreign policy. Most were reluctant to commit troops to overseas military engagements—the “Vietnam syndrome.” Questioning authority, however, diminished during the run-up to the Iraq War in 2003. Most Americans did not pay attention, wanted revenge for 9/11, and believed the Bush administration's claims regarding Saddam Hussein and Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). The press also failed to demand explanations, repeating the administrations talking points; a veteran reporter found that between September 2002 and the beginning

⁹ Linda Feldmann, “Support for Legal Marijuana May Have Reached a Tipping Point,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 4 April 2013; Joel Stein, “The New Politics of Pot: Can It Go Legit?” *Time*, 4 November 2002, 57-61.

¹⁰ John C. McWilliams, *The 1960s Cultural Revolution* (Westport, CT, 2000), 88.

of the war, only 6 of over 400 articles raised questions about the necessity of going to war.¹¹

Political and cultural dissenters curbed the power of government and bureaucracies. Following the sixties, the police, National Guard, military, IRS, and FBI, intruded less into individuals' daily lives. These agencies also became more integrated and diverse, hiring racial minorities and women. Students also exercised greater rights at universities and they also played a greater role in governing the university.¹²

Environmentalism continues to thrive. Enthusiasm for environmental causes reached a crescendo in 1970 and resulted in the passage of several significant environmental measures. President Nixon cared little about environmental issues, but he refrained from contesting reformers, and signed several bills passed by bi-partisan majorities. In January 1970, Nixon approved the National Environmental Policy Act, which established the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA was tasked with enforcing environmental laws. It also required government agencies—and later, most non-government entities—to submit environmental impact statements for various projects. In the early 1970s, congress passed, and Nixon signed, several other important laws designed to protect the environment, including a Clean Air Act (1970), a Federal Water Pollution Control Act (1972), and in 1973, an Endangered Species Act. President George H.W. Bush signed another Clean Air Act into law in 1990. Recently, the threat

¹¹ Tony Schwartz, "Decade of Change for 60's Youth Altered Living Styles but Not Some Attitudes," *New York Times*, 13 August 1979, p. A15; Dickstein, "After Utopia," in Tischler, ed., *Sights on the Sixties*, 14, 19; Terry H. Anderson, *Bush's Wars* (New York, 2011), 124.

¹² Lytle, *America's Uncivil Wars*, 376.

of global warming has galvanized environmentalists to action. Other environmental movement legacies include an interest in recycling and renewable energy.

The natural foods movement is prospering. Health-conscious consumers hoping to avoid pesticides and anti-biotics in meat and milk buy organic. Whole Foods has enjoyed great success. In 2002, over 130 stores were in operation. The chain made 2.3 billion dollars and its profits surged twenty percent in 2001. The share price of its stock rose 125 percent between 2000 and 2002 and more than 750 percent between 1992, when Whole Foods was founded, and 2002. Individual stores that had been established for at least six years experienced a six percent growth rate compared to 1.5 percent for a typical chain. Natural and organic foods sales throughout the country grew at the rate of eighteen percent per year, and in 2002, analysts expected total sales to exceed seventeen billion. In addition to eating organic foods, many practice organic gardening, composting, buy produce at farmers' markets, and use holistic medicine.¹³

Millions of Americans do yoga, from stars to athletes to judges on the highest courts. In 2001, some fifteen million people included yoga in their exercise regimen, double the number that did in 1996. Most health clubs—75 percent—offer yoga lessons. Others have adopted practices previously associated with the counterculture like sensitivity training, est, meditation, and body awareness.¹⁴

The Sixties are becoming cool again, especially the era's rock music. Nike used the Beatles song "Revolution" in a television ad in the 1980s. In 1998, Sprint used the Rolling Stones' song "Time Is On My Side" to sell a calling plan, AT&T used Sly and

¹³ Daren Fonda, "Organic Growth," *Time*, 12 August 2002.

¹⁴ Richard Corliss, "The Power of Yoga," *Time*, 9 July 2001.

the Family Stone's "I Want To Take You Higher" to show, ironically, how its products aided job promotion, and Pontiac used Jimi Hendrix's "Fire" to advertise its Sunfire model.¹⁵

The Beatles continue to be immensely popular. Three generations of Beatles fans love them and eagerly purchase their products. The Beatles Album "1," a collection of 27 chart-topping British and American hits released in 2000, sold seven million copies and spent eight weeks at number one. Observers pointed out that kids under twelve contributed greatly to the album's sales. In September 2009, stores unveiled the Beatles Rock Band, a video game, and Apple Corps/Capitol reissued all thirteen of their albums, digitally remastered. Obsessed Beatlemaniacs could also buy a box set that contained every Beatles song in mono for nearly \$300 dollars.¹⁶

The Beatles' archrivals, the Rolling Stones, still record and perform. They released a new album in 2005, *A Bigger Bang*. The band followed the album's release with "A Bigger Bang" tour that fall, which grossed \$437 million worldwide, a new record. In 2008, director Martin Scorsese produced a Stones concert film, *Shine a Light*. Ticket prices for their 2013 tour ranged from \$150 to more than \$2,000 dollars.¹⁷

Business is also booming for the Grateful Dead. Various products—luggage, video games, ceramic mugs, a version of Monopoly, even a red wine—display the Dead's logo. The band also ranked among the top of revenue-grossing rock acts until the untimely death of frontman Jerry Garcia in August 1995. From 1990 to 1995, the

¹⁵ McWilliams, *The 1960s Cultural Revolution*, 87, 92.

¹⁶ Ali Lorraine, "The New Invasion," *Newsweek*, 26 February 2001, 68; Richard Corliss, "I Am the Walrus," *Time*, 14 September 2009, 59-61.

¹⁷ Mikal Gilmore, "Soul Survivors," *Rolling Stone*, 23 May 2013, 46-82; Steve Knopper, "Stone Rule the Road," *Rolling Stone*, 25 January 2007, 12.

Dead racked up \$285 million on tour; nearly eight million people—devoted fans dubbed “Deadheads”—attended 530 shows. After the celebrated band’s demise, jam-band followers flocked to the shows of Phish and the String Cheese Incident, acts similar to the Dead.¹⁸

Countercultural outposts survived into the 1980s and beyond. In 1984, some 25,000 hippies journeyed to the Modoc National Forest of California for a “Rainbow Family” reunion. Counterculturalists propped up tents, tepees, and yurts, and openly smoked dope and dropped acid. Other festivities took place as well. Children marched in a parade with painted faces, carrying banners and balloons, and on top of a mountain, 5,000 participated in a silent prayer. Hundreds of communes founded in the sixties still exist, including Hog Farm, The Farm, and Twin Oaks.¹⁹

Countercultural trends continued into the 1990s. Early in the decade, fans of “alternative” music bucked the mainstream, while in the late nineties, various countercultural groups with alternative identities—goths, rastas, and ravers—surfaced. With the advent of the internet, youth visited conspiracy theory sites and posted about dope on psychedelic bulletin boards. Hundreds of thousands of kids attended rock festivals like Lollapalooza, H.O.R.D.E., and Lilith Fair.²⁰

Woodstock became a political issue in the lead-up to the 2008 presidential election. At a debate in October 2007, John McCain, a Republican presidential candidate, remarked, “a few days ago, Senator Clinton tried to spend one million on the

¹⁸ David Browne, “Business Booming for the Dead,” *Rolling Stone*, 2 February 2012, 15-18; Ray Waddell, “Dead Live on in Touring Legacy,” *Billboard*, 11 May 2002.

¹⁹ Jules Archer, *The Incredible Sixties: The Stormy Years That Changed America* (New York, 1986), 200-201; Miller, *60s Communes*, 228-230.

²⁰ R.U. Sirius, “The New Counterculture,” *Time*, 9 November 1998, 88-89.

Woodstock concert museum. Now, my friends, I wasn't there. I'm sure it was a cultural and pharmaceutical event. I was tied up at the time. No one can be president of the United States that supports projects such as these." McCain missed Woodstock because the North Vietnamese held him prisoner in 1969. He used the "tied-up" line to be humorous, but the implications of his statement went much deeper. A political commercial that McCain ran in New Hampshire aired the remarks he made above, while presenting a series of images. One was of a young woman dancing "trance-like" at Woodstock; the other was McCain lying on his back, smoking a cigarette as a P.O.W. McCain used Woodstock as a symbol to polarize the electorate, dredging up divisive issues of the past—and, as it turned out, the present. The counterculture still divides Americans today and McCain employed Woodstock to draw distinctions, in his mind and the minds of many others, between God-fearing, responsible, patriotic, conservatives who answered their country's call to arms, and those who attended Woodstock—draft-dodging, drug abusing, anti-American, liberals.²¹

While the counterculture's legacy is clear, evaluating the counterculture is ultimately an exercise in subjectivity. No scholar can prove definitively whether the counterculture succeeded or failed. Moreover, being a part of the counterculture was almost entirely an individual experience; thus, no historian can conclude objectively whether a person's individual journey was meaningful or good or terrible or anything else.

²¹ Jim Rutenberg, "McCain Reflects on P.O.W. Past, and Goes After Clinton," *The New York Times*, 25 October 2007.

There is much to criticize. A dope revolution did not come to pass; in fact, the idea that LSD and other drugs could change the world turned out to be a hopeless delusion. Drugs and alcohol claimed the lives of untold rank-and-file counterculturalists; numerous celebrity hipsters also succumbed to substance abuse: Jim Morrison, Brian Jones, Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, Keith Moon, Gram Parsons of the Byrds and Flying Burrito Brothers, Dennis Wilson of the Beach Boys, John Bonham of Led Zeppelin, Danny Whitten of Crazy Horse, Pigpen of the Grateful Dead, and Al Wilson and Bob “The Bear” Hite of Canned Heat. Many who wandered the Haight during the Summer of Love did not take cultural radicalism seriously or seek to better themselves or society. For some individuals, being a hippie meant little more than getting laid and stoned. “The air was so thick with bullshit you could cut it with a knife,” recalled cartoonist Robert Crumb. “Guys were running around saying, ‘I’m you and you are me and everything is beautiful, so get down and suck my dick.’ These young, middle-class kids were just too dumb about it. It was just too silly.” An unfortunate result of the counterculture’s uninhibited sexuality was the spread of sexually transmitted diseases. Reported cases of gonorrhea among teens ages fifteen to nineteen nearly tripled between 1956 and 1969. Other hippies lived like bums and engaged in self-destructive behavior, sleeping, stealing, and begging on the street, strung out on every kind of drug imaginable—weed, hash, mescaline, cocaine, heroin, and pills of all sorts. In Afghanistan, freaks went to extraordinary lengths to get a drug fix, selling themselves or their girlfriends into prostitution.²²

²² Crumb quoted in Peck, *Uncovering the Sixties*, 51; “End of Youth Revolt,” 27; Robert Merry,

But, many, if not most, former hippies look back fondly at their experiences. Nearly all of the hundreds of people contacted by the 60s Communes Project, for instance, believed that their time as communards “was a high point in American history as well as in their own lives.” Although most remembered the intenseness of communal living, they all found it exhilarating. Don McCoy called his time at Olompali Ranch a “life changing experience and a change for the better and the most colorful time in my life.” Most believe that their communes were successes. The simple fact that they had attempted communal living at all and had new and learning experiences was reason enough to deem it a success, even if their collective had fallen apart. “I often describe Drop City as the best years of my life,” remarked Clark Richert. “It was a period of freedom and the feeling of unlimited possibilities.” Finally, many former counterculturalists are completely unapologetic for the Sixties and their part in the counterculture, for they believe hippiedom altered America for the better. “Our victories occurred in the deep waters of culture and not the frothy white water of current events, so they rarely surface in the media,” wrote Peter Coyote in his memoir, *Sleeping Where I Fall*. “The way people view health issues, the environment, human rights, spirituality, agriculture, women, and consciousness itself has been redefined by my generation. These changes are as ubiquitous and invisible as the atmosphere.” David Crosby, speaking to a *Time* interviewer in 2006, remarked, “I think we were right about everything except the drugs. We were right about civil rights; we were right about human rights; we were right about peace being better than war. Most of the causes we

“Hippies Find Afghanistan a Hellish Drug Haven,” *Chicago Tribune*, 9 August 1971, p. A9.

espoused then were correct.” And Paul Kantner of the Jefferson Airplane speaks for many when he stated, “For like two weeks in the middle of 1967 . . . it was perfect.”²³

To conclude, then, *The Rise and Fall of the American Counterculture* fills a major void in the historical literature. Most scholars have focused on one aspect of the counterculture, examined it in a couple of locations, or relegated it to a single chapter. Moreover, scholarly narratives have been nearly identical, repeating the same themes and events, while presenting similar explanations for hippiedom’s origins and decline. Many historians utilize secondary sources and rely heavily on Theodore Roszak’s pioneering work.

This study is different—it is the first comprehensive history of the hippies and other cultural dissidents, documenting the counterculture throughout the United States from its antecedents in the 1950s, to its origins in the early 1960s, to its emergence in the mid 1960s, to its blooming in the late 1960s, to its decline in the 1970s. Moreover, this study is based on documents seldom examined by historians, the underground newspapers, interviews, flyers, and pamphlets produced by counterculturalists. These sources provide crucial insights into the hippie philosophy and illuminate the forces that caused the counterculture’s materialization and decline.

The traditional interpretation of the counterculture that defines it as essentially “sex, drugs, and rock and roll” is fundamentally contested. To fixate on these characteristics does a disservice to a considerably more complex phenomenon as hippies

²³ Miller, *60s Communes*, 233-234; Matthews, *Droppers*, 206; Peter Coyote, *Sleeping Where I Fall: A Chronicle* (Washington, D.C., 1998), 349; Andrea Sachs, “Rock Survivor,” *Time*, 22 October 2006; Kantner in *The History of Rock and Roll*, Episode: My Generation, prod. Andrew Solt, Time-Life Video, 578 min., 1995, DVD.

held numerous values that continually evolved. The sex, drugs, and rock and roll interpretation also overlooks the counterculture's grander objective: the creation of a new society based on alternative institutions and a new culture undergirded by the ethics of community, cooperation, love, and egalitarianism. Many other counterculturalists, of course, had no intention of attempting such an enterprise; for them, becoming a hippie simply involved assuming a new lifestyle and outlook.

The Rise and Fall of the American Counterculture contends that hippiedom's development occurred in four stages: its antecedents and origins from 1945 to 1965; its nascent period in 1965 and 1966; its flowering from 1967 to 1970; and its zenith and waning from 1970 through 1973.

Few historians have analyzed the counterculture's origins. Theodore Roszak has argued that the counterculture appeared because youth revolted against a technocracy, reason, rationalism, and scientific forms of knowledge. Godfrey Hodgson, David Farber, Allen Matusow, Irwin Unger, William L. O'Neill, William Leuchtenberg, Timothy Miller, Ed Morgan, Maurice Isserman, Michael Kazin, David Chalmers, and Klaus Fischer have stressed the influence of the Beats, black culture, LSD, dissenting intellectuals, films, magazines, and comedians. They posit other forces responsible for the counterculture's rise as well: post-war affluence, permissive child rearing, and youths suspending themselves between adolescence and adulthood. When discussing hippiedom's beginnings, most historians also mention the sway of Ken Kesey, Timothy Leary, and the Beatles.

Yet, hippies made no secret about their motivations for rebelling against the mainstream—they told us why they did in underground newspapers and interviews. There is no evidence of later longhairs' concern about experts, technology, and scientific forms of knowledge. Nor did dropouts express their desire to resist growing up. Postwar affluence and permissive childrearing are also unconvincing interpretations; affluence and permissive childrearing have been common features in America for over 60 years, and yet countercultures of the magnitude of the sixties era have not materialized since. Other alleged influences are also unpersuasive. Future freaks did not drop out because of something they read, for the printed page did not wield that kind of power.

The Beat influence has also been overemphasized and overestimated. To be sure, the Beats had a considerable effect on the eldest of hippies; the vast majority of the counterculture, however, did not discover Beat literature until after they had already dropped out, if at all.

Kesey and Timothy Leary were also less crucial to the counterculture's development than scholars have suggested. Kesey anticipated hippiedom's values and appearances—but he did not invent them. And, although Leary loomed large in the nation's consciousness as a LSD prophet, there were few Leary acolytes—even in the Haight-Ashbury. Cultural rebels discovered acid on their own, and alienation, not Leary, caused them to become hippies.

No scholar knows better than the counterculturalists themselves why they became counterculturalists. An extensive analysis of hippie sources reveals that Cold

War America—the institutions, culture, and government—*alienated* the youths who became hippies. The Red Scare, boring and dead-end suburbs, conformity and consumerism, the multiversity, racism and Jim Crow, the arms race, campus paternalism, draft, and, most importantly, America’s war in Vietnam, disillusioned later longhairs, causing them to jettison the dominant culture, its traditions, values, and lifestyles.

Historians such as Allen Matusow and William O’ Neill have also missed other crucial factors behind the counterculture’s rise. Hippies shared similar grievances as New Leftists. Future freaks did not come of age in a vacuum, isolated from the developments that frustrated and alienated activists such as racism and segregation, the proliferation of nuclear arms, civil liberties abuses of HUAC, and the bloated and impersonal multiversity. Many hippies engaged in New Left activism, fighting Jim Crow, the arms race, and HUAC, and agitating for free speech rights, before they became cultural radicals.

Historians have neglected to provide the counterculture’s first years—1965 and 1966—with adequate scholarly attention. Klaus Fischer, Alice Echols, Howard Brick, John C. McWilliams, Mark Hamilton Lytle, Ed Morgan, David Burner, David Farber, Allen Matusow, David Chalmers, Arthur Marwick, and William O’Neill, have focused primarily on San Francisco and the antics and exploits of Ken Kesey and the Merry Pranksters, while a few have examined the hippies in the East Village of New York. They have also been narrow in their focus concerning hippie activity, writing about the “acid tests” and Trips Festival, while failing to document other important events.

Analysis of hippie values is limited to sex, drugs (especially LSD), and rock and roll.

The counterculture's nascent period was far more involved and complex. In addition to San Francisco and New York, Los Angeles had become a formidable hippie community by 1966 and the drug culture on the nation's campuses in the East, West, and Midwest also burgeoned. Hippie activity predated Kesey's acid tests; numerous art and poetry-related "happenings" occurred in Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco. The counterculture evolved swiftly. The dancehall rock concert scene evolved in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Michigan, becoming social institutions for early hippies. San Francisco's "Human Be-In" of January 1967 was not the first "psychedelic picnic." Hippies had gathered for the Summer Solstice in San Francisco in the summer of 1966 and freaks held "love-ins" in San Francisco and New York that fall. In its formative years, the counterculture's bedrock values developed: liberated sexuality, love for rock music, and dope as a pathway to enlightenment and higher consciousness. But hippies cultivated other, equally important, principles as well: living for the present, living precariously, and emphasizing community and togetherness. During this inchoate phase, the counterculture consisted solely of cultural rebels, and differences in appearance and social philosophy of the counterculture and New Left became evident.

Historians have written extensively about the period 1967-1969. For them, the late 1960s represented the high tide of the counterculture. Sex, drugs and rock and roll receive substantial treatment, and some scholars expand their discussions to include communal living and the underground press. Again, discourse is limited to San Francisco and the East Village of New York. Historians usually profile Bob Dylan, the

Beatles, Timothy Leary, LSD, Diggers, the Summer of Love, Haight-Ashbury, and the Monterey Pop Festival. Many scholars, including William O’Neill, Klaus Fischer, David Steigerwald, John C. McWilliams, Godfrey Hodgson, David Chalmers, and Allen Matusow, then turn to dark side of hippiedom, positing that the counterculture did not survive the sixties, and they cite as evidence the decline of Haight-Ashbury, the Manson Family’s murderous rampage, and the Altamont death concert. When exploring the counterculture’s constitution, the New Left and counterculture are usually juxtaposed. The traditional interpretation advanced by scholars such as Thomas Frank, Allen Matusow, David Caute, Timothy Miller, Mark Hamilton Lytle, and David Farber, maintains that New Leftists were largely white college students committed to politics and confronting the political Establishment, while the counterculture was composed of young people, many of them ex-students and non-students, who were concerned with cultural endeavors and the quest for personal liberation. Revisionists like David McBride and others contest this interpretation, arguing that the lines separating the two phenomena were porous and that hippies and politicians shared the same social space. Some historians have acknowledged that the lines dividing the New Left and hippies faded or blurred in the late 1960s, but the discussion remains unsatisfactory, as few have investigated the relationship between the two camps very deeply.

Between 1967 and 1970, the quintessential counterculture—flower power, love-ins, the Summer of Love and Haight-Ashbury, Woodstock, Altamont, daisies in rifle barrels—emerged. During the Age of Aquarius—a time of faith, optimism, and love—the counterculture burgeoned, suffusing America, and hippies endeavored to build the

new society. The counterculture maintained its earlier ethics, while developing additional principles: love, dropping out, “doing one’s own thing,” communal living, Eastern religions and mysticism, and opposing the Establishment. Although many hippies did not enjoy friendly relationships with minorities in Haight-Ashbury and the East Village, some freaks actively reached out to minorities, holding be-ins for them in Los Angeles, while assisting ghetto residents in Newark following the 1967 riots. The Diggers and Yippies interacted with, and idolized, champions of Black Power. As the counterculture grew, it experienced a verbal and physical backlash from majority society and police. Hippiedom flourished in San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, but elsewhere, too, in Wisconsin, Michigan, Massachusetts, Florida, Washington, Oregon, Nebraska, Texas, and numerous other locales. Not all hippies were dropouts, either; counterculturalists partook in cultural activism in the form of “smoke-ins” and “nude-ins.”

The counterculture’s constitution underwent fundamental transformations. When it emerged, it consisted entirely of cultural dissidents. By the late 1960s, however, New Leftists, who had earlier differed from hippies in philosophy and appearance, began to embrace dope, long hair, liberated sexuality, and countercultural clothing. “The revolution is about our lives” became a popular slogan among movement politicians. A partial blending of the New Left and counterculture occurred; hip politicians, hippie activists, and hybrid counterculturalists—those who expressly combined political and cultural radicalism—became indistinguishable. Despite overlapping and blending, however, the counterculture and New Left remained distinct entities. The traditional

interpretation is off the mark, as it does not allow for convergences between the two phenomenons. The revisionist perspective, on the other hand, overlooks the profound philosophical divisions between hippie purists—who were concerned exclusively with personal pursuits—and politicians of all stripes.

Very few historians have given the counterculture's final years a sufficient investigation.

Historians who maintain that the counterculture did not survive the sixties have not examined primary documents produced by counterculturalists, which prove that it peaked in the early seventies. From 1970 through 1973, the counterculture expanded to include most New Leftists, becoming a united, inclusive, dissident youth culture and counterculture of millions composed of students, activists, hippies, zippies, yippies, veterans, environmentalists, cultural feminists, and communards. The traditional interpretation that distinguishes counterculture from New Left does not hold true for this period. A number of developments and events—Kent State, disillusioned anti-war demonstrators, diminished hippie purists, and an upsurge in cultural activism—merged young people of all persuasions into a common counterculture. Hippiedom hardly resembled what had gone before as it cherished organic food, camping, hitchhiking, vegetarianism, simple living, country-rock, overseas travel, and building alternative institutions. *The Rise and Fall of the American Counterculture* also examines freaks' associations with gay liberation and women's liberation, which adds a new dimension to the historiography. Most hippies hung up their alternative lifestyles when America withdrew from Vietnam, the draft ended, the economy stagnated, and the mainstream

began to co-opt their values and styles. The hippies, however, had left behind a powerful legacy: a different America.

The counterculture was not nearly as expansive as scholars like Jeremi Suri, Theodore Roszak, and Mark Hamilton Lytle, have suggested: political and cultural feminists assailed male hippies' sexism, chauvinism, and traditional conceptions of gender; Black Power advocates rarely came into contact with white freaks, and some denounced dropouts; and, many political revolutionaries did not consider themselves hippies or feel a kinship with hippies. Historians who conceptualize a counterculture that included radical and political feminists, Black Power militants, and violent, bomb-planting revolutionaries, are not familiar with, or aware of, the tremendous philosophical and strategic divisions that set these movements apart from cultural dissenters. Such interpretations also overlook the outright animosity that some radical politicians and revolutionaries felt for counterculturalists and vice versa.

A greater comprehension of the counterculture is integral to a clearer understanding of post-World War II America, and the fundamental social, cultural, and political changes that occurred during the 1960s era. The counterculture was, at its base, a reaction to Cold War society and culture. Millions of baby-boomers and others revolted against the country's diplomacy, politics, values, laws, morality, religion, government, and institutions. They believed they had found a better way and attempted to create a new society, rejecting Establishment values. Most Americans—Nixon's "Silent Majority"—reacted both verbally and physically to the youthful dissidents, denouncing them in newspapers and attacking them. Mainstream Americans reaffirmed

their faith in traditional codes of behavior, principles, morals, and standards. As we have seen, the counterculture is also vital to clearer understanding of modern America as the hippies were integral to the advent of the “culture wars.” Countercultural activity caused a backlash that, in part, fueled the ascent of modern conservatism.

In the larger scope of American history, the counterculture was part of a long tradition of dissent from prevailing societal norms. Although many hippies were convinced that they were a new people creating a whole new social order, Nineteenth Century romanticists like the Shakers, Hutterites, and Oneida Perfectionists had preceded them, forming back-to-the-land communes. New Harmony was established in 1825 in Indiana and its residents attempted to found an egalitarian society. Other communitarians established Brook Farm in Massachusetts in 1841 where they endeavored to create a new society, sharing labor, while putting a premium on individual time for achieving self-realization. Hippies, too, shared a family resemblance with the transcendentalists. Henry David Thoreau, who disdained his neighbors’ scramble for wealth, secluded himself in a cabin at Walden Pond in Massachusetts where he lived a simple life, enjoyed nature, and engaged in self-reflection. In the Twentieth Century, 1920s youth challenged traditional morals and sexual standards. And yet, the counterculture was unique, a phenomenon which will not likely be repeated. Only time will tell.²⁴

²⁴ Miller, *60s Communes*, 1.

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Social Action Vertical File
Underground Newspaper Collection

Underground Newspapers

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Aquarian (Tampa)
Asterisk (Omaha)
Astral Projection (Albuquerque)
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Avatar (Boston)
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Oracle of Southern California (Los Angeles)
Outlaw (St. Louis)
Paper (Mendocino, CA)

Paper (East Lansing, MI)
Peach (Wausau, WI)
Pure Corn (Evansville, IN)
Rag (Austin)
Rat (New York)
Rebirth (Phoenix)
San Francisco Express Times
San Francisco Oracle
Sanity (Madison)
Screw (Lawrence, KS)
Seed (Chicago)
Seventy-nine Cent Spread (Carmel, CA)
Solid Muldoon (Denver)
Space City! (Houston)
Space City News (Houston)
Spare Change (Washington, D.C.)
Spokane Natural
Submarine Church Press (Northampton, MA)
Sunshine Aura (Erie, PA)
Underground (Washington, D.C.)
Washington Free Press
Western Activist (Kalamazoo, MI)
Willamette Bridge (Portland)

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