

**THE PRISON WAS THE AMERICAN DREAM:
YOUTH REVOLT AND THE ORIGINS OF THE COUNTERCULTURE**

A Thesis

by

DAMON RANDOLPH BACH

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

August 2008

Major Subject: History

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ABSTRACT

The Prison Was the American Dream:
Youth Revolt and the Origins of the Counterculture. (August 2008)

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Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. Terry H. Anderson

This thesis discusses the reasons for the emergence of the American counterculture in the mid-1960s, and makes a significant contribution to the existing literature on the subject with an innovative methodology. Historians have neglected to study the counterculture's grievances, the issues, and events that birthed it, employing a systematic year-by-year analysis. And few have used the sources most appropriate for drawing conclusions: the underground press, a medium hippies used to communicate with other like-minded individuals. This thesis does both.

The most imperative factors that led to the emergence of the counterculture can be firmly placed in the first years of the 1960s. Students and dropouts feared the prospect of worldwide nuclear annihilation, and railed against the Cold War and the Cold War consensus that left little in the way of political alternatives. Old Guard liberals became targets, for they seemed to be complacent with America's foreign policy, which prolonged and entrenched the Cold War world. American society and the Establishment frustrated and angered the young. It posed a danger to civil liberties and equality for minorities, while restricting freedom. Most grievously, American universities and those who ran them sought to assimilate youths into the military-

industrial complex, threatening one's individuality and humanity. Youths resisted becoming a part of the social machine, a cog in the system. These factors, combined with the assassination of Kennedy and the influence of musicians like Bob Dylan and the Beatles, put many on an alienation trajectory.

Then, in 1965, Lyndon Johnson committed the first combat troops to Vietnam. America's involvement in the war sent those who weathered the shocks of the early 1960s spiraling further off into alienation, but the war alone, affecting those coming of age in the mid to late 1960s, produced new hippies, hundreds of thousands, if not millions. The actions of the Establishment, including its war, campus paternalism and bureaucracy, police repression, lack of democracy, the capitalist system, and corrupt government leaders made the young more cynical, angry, disgusted, while the intolerant majority and the prospect of living a conventional lifestyle further alienated youths.

DEDICATION

For my grandparents Al and Elsie and my family:

Randy, Suzanne, Jennifer, and Alana

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First and foremost, I would like to thank Dr. Terry H. Anderson for agreeing to take me on as a graduate student and sit as chairman of my thesis committee. He helped me choose the research topic and helped formulate the methodology. His expertise on the counterculture, as well as his suggestions regarding organization and content has been instrumental to the crafting of this study.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: THE ORIGINS OF THE COUNTERCULTURE

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.¹ Billed as the "Gathering of the Tribes," the event drew 10,000 people. Celebrities and visionaries of the hippie community attended, including Allen Ginsberg, painter Michael Bowen, playwright Michael McClure, and psychedelic drug guru Timothy Leary. The crowd, mostly made up of young people, wore feathers, furs, animal hides, chains, beads, cloaks, and floppy hats. Some strolled around the grounds carrying flags, balloons, and shaman sticks, while others smoked marijuana. Many dropped acid. All the while, rock bands Grateful Dead, Big Brother and the Holding Company, and Quicksilver Messenger Service provided the music to which the hippies grooved.

This spectacle bewildered Middle Americans. Mr. and Mrs. Slocum, tourists on vacation from Kansas, gazed upon the gathering. "Their parents are tearing their hearts out worrying about them," said Mrs. Slocum, "and here they are taking drugs, and going dirty, and having free sex before they even know how to raise babies. They all need to be spanked, washed, and sent home." Mr. Slocum was equally astonished. He wondered what they were rebelling against and how they got there?²

This thesis follows the style of *The Journal of American History*.

¹ Be-ins were unstructured mass gatherings that created the opportunity for hippies to indulge in community, love, sex, dope, nudity, and rock music. Some saw them as catalysts for spreading the vibes of the "new community."

² Burton H. Wolfe, *The Hippies* (New York, 1968), 9, 11, 14.

Numerous scholars have pondered this same question and many have written on the origins of the counterculture. The first book appeared in 1969, when Theodore Roszak argued in *The Making of a Counterculture* that hippies emerged in opposition to a “technocracy,” a society whose leaders justified themselves by appeal to scientific forms of knowledge while “gambling madly with the universal extermination of our species.” For Roszak, the counterculture sought to subvert the “scientific worldview,” questioning the mainstream culture’s notions of reason and reality.³ A year later, William Braden, in *The Age of Aquarius*, attributed the rise of the hippies to a fundamental struggle over America’s identity. Young people revolted against the “technetronic society,” and endeavored to undermine the psychological, philosophical, and theological assumptions that gave structure to the technological impulse, which served to manipulate the environment and dominate the universe.⁴

Others have cited alienation as the root cause. Kenneth Keniston, writing throughout the 1960s, compiled his observations in his book *Youth and Dissent* (1971). Employing a psychoanalytical approach, he identified thirteen strands of estrangement, including interpersonal alienation, social alienation, and cultural alienation, all part of what he termed the “alienation syndrome.”⁵ In *The Movement and the Sixties* (1995), Terry H. Anderson asserted that disaffected youths were inundated with inconsistencies, ironies, and contradictions in society and America’s institutions. The hypocrisy evident in double standards for men and women, children and parents, individuals and the

³ Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counterculture: Reflections on the Technocratic Society and its Youthful Opposition* (Garden City, NY, 1969), 47.

⁴ William Braden, *The Age of Aquarius: Technology and the Cultural Revolution* (Chicago, 1970), 3-18.

⁵ Kenneth Keniston, *Youth and Dissent: The Rise of a New Opposition* (New York, 1971).

government, along with Jim Crow racism, campus paternalism, the war in Vietnam, and an unfair draft caused many to rebel.⁶

Historians have written on the existence of similar movements that predated the American counterculture. In *A Troubled Feast* (1973), William L. Leuchtenburg mentioned “the Bohemianism of the Left Bank and Burschenschaften of nineteenth century Germany,” enthusiasms that resembled the American phenomenon. He also pointed out that the “revolution in morals” and critique of Puritanism and materialism in America in the 1920s, foreshadowed the counterculture.⁷

Other factors historians have cited for the rise of the counterculture include post-war affluence and pampered youth. Godfrey Hodgson in his *America in Our Time* (1976), quoting John Searle’s *The Campus War*, stressed that young, middle-class Americans had been brought up in a “warm, permissive, forgiving, child-centered style of home life, very different from the life for which the child was being prepared.”⁸ Hodgson submitted that hippies attempted to prolong their adolescence for as long as possible.⁹ Allen J. Matusow in *The Unraveling of America* (1984) also emphasized that hippies, surrounded by affluence, attempted to remain in limbo between adolescence and adulthood.¹⁰ Theodore Roszak, like Hodgson and Matusow, blamed the parents of the

⁶ Terry H. Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties* (New York, 1995).

⁷ William E. Leuchtenburg, *A Troubled Feast: American Society Since 1945* (Boston, 1979), 179.

⁸ John Searle, *The Campus War: A Sympathetic Look at the University in Agony* (New York, 1971) quoted in Godfrey Hodgson, *America in Our Time: From World War II to Nixon, What Happened and Why?* (New York, 1976), 316.

⁹ Hodgson, *America in Our Time*, 311.

¹⁰ Allen J. Matusow, *The Unraveling of America: A History of Liberalism in the 1960s*, The New American Nation Series (New York, 1984).

baby-boomers for equipping them with an “anemic superego,” the result of Dr. Spock and permissive childrearing.¹¹

Numerous writers have submitted the “generation gap” explanation. William L. O’Neill, in *Coming Apart* (1971), proclaimed that the counterculture was a product of social conflict and a function of age whereby, “a kind of ideological struggle between the young and their elders” became apparent.¹² Two decades later, In *Hippies and American Values* (1991), Timothy Miller’s thoughts echoed O’ Neill’s. He wrote that there was a “great distrust among the hippies of persons very far beyond adolescence.”¹³

Virtually all historians discuss the Beats as forebears, and they also cite various writers, intellectuals, black culture, movies and magazines, and oral contraceptives as significant influences. It seems that for many scholars, all it took was a large group of youngsters who loathed a “rotten society.” Throw in Timothy Leary, Ken Kesey, The Beatles, and Bob Dylan and one has the ingredients for the counterculture. Usually, writers attempt to sum up its origins in a few sentences, accentuating its rejection of middle-class conventions and values.¹⁴

These studies have had a number of deficiencies. Most scholarship on the hippies has been written primarily from secondary resources, regurgitations of what others have written on the origins. Roszak’s *The Making of a Counterculture* is still a

¹¹ Roszak, *The Making of a Counterculture*, 30.

¹² William L. O’ Neill, *Coming Apart: An Informal History of America in the 1960s* (Chicago, 1971), 233.

¹³ Timothy Miller, *The Hippies and American Values* (Knoxville, TN, 1991), 9.

¹⁴ See David Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams: America in the 1960s* (New York, 1994); Edward P. Morgan, *The 60s Experience: Hard Lessons about Modern America* (Philadelphia, 1991); David Chalmers, *And the Crooked Places Made Straight: The Struggle for Social Change in the 1960s* (Baltimore, MD, 1991); John C. McWilliams, *The 1960s Cultural Revolution* (Westport, CT, 2000); Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s* (New York, 2000); Mark Hamilton Lytle, *America’s Uncivil Wars: The Sixties Era from Elvis to the Fall of Richard Nixon* (New York, 2006).

favorite and many cite him when penning their accounts. Explanations for the emergence of the counterculture are all very similar. There has been very little inquiry into the subject since the late 1960s and early 1970s. Consequently, scholarship on the rise of the hippies has become static and un-probing. Not all write from secondary sources. Some writers have examined primary documents from the era, but these were establishment sources such as magazine, journal and newspaper articles that presented a skewed perspective of the counterculture, condescending and belittling portrayals written by individuals not involved in the scene.

This thesis argues from the premise that the hippies themselves are the most reliable and best suited sources for telling us why they became hippies, and that is why it is based on the underground press. Only Miller and Anderson have perused the undergrounds, a medium hippies used to communicate with other like-minded individuals and anyone else interested in what they had to say. In the mid 1960s there were only a handful of underground tabloids, written by youthful dissidents. By 1969, however, some 500 papers served 9 million readers nationally.¹⁵ These undergrounds flourished in every major city and college town across the continent. Papers published between 1962 and 1967 were examined for this thesis. The first undergrounds became available in 1962, so analysis begins here. This study ends in 1967 because the counterculture existed almost everywhere in the U.S. by this time.

¹⁵ Laurence Leamer, *The Paper Revolutionaries: The Rise of the Underground Press* (New York, 1972), 14; Abe Peck, *Uncovering the Sixties: The Life and Times of the Underground Press* (New York, 1985), xv.

No historians have devoted themselves to answering the question of origins specifically, employing a systematic year-by-year analysis. This study employs this methodology for it elucidates the chief forces behind the growing of the counterculture throughout the 1960s. This thesis also will assess the degree to which various sources affected the origins of the counterculture, placing more emphasis on particular events and developments than others.

In 1965, the counterculture began to emerge in significant numbers in the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco. It did not magically appear. The factors that roused the counterculture were in place before mid-decade. Historians have overlooked a particular constellation of social, cultural, political, and historical convergences, all of which alienated youths. These factors, combined with intellectual, literary, and pop culture influences, produced the counterculture. Of all the arguments made for the emergence of the counterculture, alienation stands as the most plausible; however, this term needs clarification. In some texts—mostly in works that reserve little space for the counterculture—the author simply states that youths were alienated from society and that they rejected American values and institutions. Although this is true, this study will attempt to clarify specific sentiments within the alienation paradigm, spelling out in detail what it was, exactly, about the American way of life that alienated youths.

The term counterculture must be defined. During the late 1960s, most adults believed those who wore long hair, beards, beads, and outrageous clothing belonged to a monolithic movement. In reality, “the movement” was a formless mass of individuals whose common interests included rock, pot, peace, and the rejection of “the

establishment.”¹⁶ Some historians have argued that the counterculture was made up of three distinct coteries: the hippies, the New Left, and Black Power.¹⁷ But most define the counterculture as the cohort of cultural dissidents, those not interested in political activism, but personal pursuits: the hippies. For our purposes here, we will use this definition.

That being said, one might inquire why a thesis concerning the cultural revolutionaries should concentrate so heavily on political issues. Simply put, the dawn of the counterculture cannot be divorced from politics. Many hippies attempted to escape political realities, preferring to be uninvolved in politics and demonstrations. But others during this tumultuous decade agitated for cultural revolution which necessitated fighting in the social and political sphere against laws that hampered the countercultural lifestyle and ethics.¹⁸

This thesis progresses chronologically. Chapter II addresses possible forces as they relate to the origins of the counterculture. Then it proceeds to detail influences as discerned through underground sources, beginning in Chapter III, which covers the years 1948-1961. Chapter IV expounds on influences from 1962-1964; Chapter V from 1965-1967, and the thesis closes with concluding remarks in Chapter VI.

¹⁶ Leamer, *The Paper Revolutionaries*, 13; The Establishment was a loosely defined term that denoted the dominant “system.”

¹⁷ Lytle, *America’s Uncivil Wars*, 199.

¹⁸ Miller, *Hippies and American Values*, 107.

CHAPTER II

POSSIBLE INFLUENCES IN THE MAKING OF A COUNTERCULTURE

Several developments between 1920 and 1964 may have influenced the emergence of the counterculture.

In the 1960s, hippies determined that people should be free to express themselves sexually with few restrictions. Sex was enjoyable, fun, and healthy. They did more than any other subset of youth to accelerate the sexual revolution. But the development of modern sexual ethics and practices, as historian Beth Bailey has argued, was more of an “evolution” than “revolution.”¹⁹ Several developments prior to the blossoming of the hippies may have enabled them to practice free love.

It could be argued that a sexual revolution was already underway prior to the 1960s. Unsettling changes occurred in American society in the 1920s, when youths challenged the Victorian culture. Women dressed less modestly. Referred to as “flappers,” they donned short skirts, caked on make-up, cut their hair short, drank and smoked. Traditionalists fumed over the young people’s tendency to attend “lewd” films and take late-night joy rides together. Critics bemoaned what they believed to be widespread sexual promiscuity. Avant-garde authors disregarded Victorian proprieties, writing freely on their sexual experiences. Print media, too, entered taboo territory: advertising became more permissive, while magazine editors printed images appealing to the heterosexual male libido. Growing divorce rates, smaller families and the

¹⁹ Beth Bailey, “Sexual Revolution(s),” in David Farber, ed., *The Sixties: From Memory to History* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1994), 237.

“expressive gyrations and contortions” associated with jazz, alarmed many. This concern over the transgression of accepted sexual mores continued through the 1950s. In 1954, Harvard sociologist Pitirim Sorokin contended the “sex revolution” would bring on the collapse of American society.²⁰ Those who defied convention in the 1920s helped reorient society’s attitudes toward sexuality and proper sexual etiquette for women. The hip in the 1960s may have benefited from ground broken during this period, facilitating the pushing of the sexual envelope even further. Whether hippies profited or not, at the very least, youths of the “roaring twenties” set a precedent for the hippies in assaulting accepted sexual maxims.

Other events possibly loosened up America’s temperament towards sexuality. Immediately following World War II, the government began striking down laws barring “sexually explicit” materials as unconstitutional. Judges wanted the free market to govern cultural practices, not the self-appointed arbiters of good taste from churches and local communities. Many kinds of sexually explicit materials began to reach the public. Books, movies, and magazines took more liberties. In 1953, Hugh Hefner’s *Playboy* hit the newsstand. Marketed as a “respectable” men’s magazine, topless “girls next door” graced its pages. Three years following its inception, its circulation numbered one million. The “playboy message” was straightforward: have many sexual partners and avoid relationships that would necessitate “settling down.” The magazine broke sexual codes regarding monogamy and nudity, and brought sexuality out into the open. Timothy Miller argued that *Playboy*, with its nude pictures littered in and around

²⁰ David Allyn, *Make Love, Not War: The Sexual Revolution, An Unfettered History* (New York, 2000), 4.

material for the mind—politics, current events, reviews of fiction and non-fiction—furthered the idea that sexual pleasure and intellectual pursuits were not at odds. Hefner’s publication, according to Miller, played somewhat of a “role in the development of countercultural sexual ethics.” The hippies, in a sense, “put Hugh Hefner’s theories into practice.”²¹

Like *Playboy*, Helen Gurley Brown’s book, *Sex and the Single Girl* (1962) may have had an effect on the impending sexual revolution. Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, Arlene Skolnick, Beth Baily, and David Allyn have cited her novel for being at the forefront of the sexual insurgency. Brown urged her female readers to have sex “whenever her body wants to.”²² She preached the virtues of unmarried sex, once commenting that “not having slept with the man you’re going to marry . . . [is] lunacy.”²³ The author told her readers that women could have sexual flings just like men, without putting their reputations or mental health in jeopardy. There is no way to know how many women acted on or were influenced by Brown’s advice. Although females within the counterculture would reject most of the points made in her book (the use of sex to land a wealthy man for example), hippie women would have hardly taken issue with the fundamental message of a liberated female sexuality.

Historians, sociologists, and other scholars have contended that the introduction of the birth control pill was a major enabler for the liberated sexuality the hippies championed. Available on the market in the early 1960s, oral contraceptives not only

²¹ Miller, *Hippies and American Values*, 60.

²² Isserman and Kazin, *America Divided*, 156.

²³ Helen Gurley Brown, *Sex and the Single Girl* (New York, 1962), 257.

constituted a major advancement in contraceptive technology, but had great implications for the sexual revolution. Many women no longer had to worry about getting pregnant, which contributed to their adoption of sexual liberation. The widespread publicity and marketing of oral contraceptives made it seem as though a freer female sexuality had the blessing of the medical establishment. Medical advances made possible the quick neutralization of gonorrhea and other venereal diseases. Sex seemed unshackled from disease, pregnancy, and shame even before the hippies had arrived.²⁴

Historians have stressed the influence of various writers. Hippies may have read the works of Herbert Marcuse. In his *Eros and Civilization* (1954), the Frankfurt school social philosopher combined Marxist and Freudian theory to argue that modern industrial society, concerned with maintaining itself, imposed undue sexual repression on its people. The eradication of this repression would bring about unbridled joy and sexuality, and a closer society. In *One-Dimensional Man* (1964), Marcuse delved into cultural and political dissent, touching on themes of alienation and the “oppressiveness of materialistic success.”²⁵

Paul Goodman and William H. Whyte, Jr., like Marcuse, offered a scathing critique of American society, especially institutions. A collection of essays, *Growing Up Absurd* (1961) focused on the plight of dropouts and juvenile delinquents, who were coming of age in an “absurd” and meaningless society with no legitimate models to follow, no satisfying roles to look forward to. In a corporate, consumerist, technocratic

²⁴ Arlene Skolnick, *Embattled Paradise: The American Family in an Age of Uncertainty*, (New York, 1991), 88-89.

²⁵ Chalmers, *And the Crooked Places Made Straight*, 97.

culture, spiritual emptiness pervaded. William H. Whyte, Jr.'s *The Organization Man* (1956) revealed corporate hypocrisy, and argued that daily American life, with its suburbs, televisions, advertising, and large bureaucratic corporations, sapped the individualistic and entrepreneurial lifeblood that had made the country so prosperous.

Historians also point to Lenny Bruce and *Mad* magazine as possible influences on children coming of age in the 1950s and early 1960s. Lenny Bruce, a Jewish black humorist, assaulted mainstream values, poked fun at the hypocrisy of the culture, and was often harsh and used obscenities while doing it. *Mad* Magazine made fun of advertising, movies, television shows, suburban life, and the military, while mocking the subject matter that middle-class magazines like *Life* and *Reader's Digest* held dear.

Historians also discuss literature and films that critiqued 1950s American culture. Some youths may have gravitated toward Holden Caulfield, the disturbed character who railed against the “phony” adult world in J.D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* (1951). Caulfield exemplified alienated youths, dropping out of prep school to meander around New York City. Still other youth probably identified with iconoclasts like James Dean in *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955). Dean plays a rebellious teenager alienated from his parents, and challenges local conventions.

Sociologist C. Wright Mills may have been particularly important to the young. In 1960 he penned his “Letter to the New Left,” in the British *New Left Review*. Mills, who believed that the capitalist system had duped and bought off the working class, identified young intellectuals around the world as the new revolutionary force. Students

were now the “new agent of revolutionary change.”²⁶ Some possibly took Mills advice at face value, the hippies promoting this revolutionary change in the social domain, the New Left doing the same in the political arena.

Some arguments that historians and other commentators postulated are more plausible than others. Allen J. Matusow has asserted that the roots of “hip,” can be found in black America. Following the great migration of blacks from the South to Northern urban ghettos during and after World War I, some men took on the persona of hipster. They reveled in uninhibited sex, did drugs, listened to jazz, and talked jive. Above all, they openly showed their disdain for an oppressive white America. By the 1940s, estranged whites in New York City and other metropolises began to identify with these black hipsters and appropriated their style. Norman Mailer wrote about the marrying of white and black hipness in his essay “The White Negro” (1957). Blacks coined terms that would wind up in the vernacular repertoire of the beats, and then the hippies—chick, cat, solid, square and gas.²⁷ Black culture alone did not give rise to the counterculture. It is important, nevertheless, to the extent that it helped characterize its language and oppositional nature.

Historians have argued that black musicians gave hip music—rock and roll—its heart and soul, which meant a great deal to white rebels. “Bob Dylan and the Beatles may have been the principal cultural icons,” one historian has written, “but the energy of Chuck Berry and Little Richard wrote the grammar of rock.”²⁸ From the moment Bill

²⁶ David Burner, *Making Peace With the 60s* (Princeton, NJ, 1996), 153.

²⁷ Matusow, *The Unraveling of America*, 280-281.

²⁸ Miller, *The Hippies and American Values*, 6.

Haley sang “Rock Around the Clock” in 1954, a whole generation realized they now had something that exclusively belonged to them, for most parents abhorred the new music. Writer Landon Jones believed rock “was the first inkling teenagers had that they might be a force to be reckoned with, in numbers alone,” and Jeff Greenfield has written, “Nothing we see in the counterculture—not the clothes, the hair, the sexuality, the drugs, the rejection of reason, the resort to symbols and magic—none of it is separable from the coming to power in the 1950s of rock and roll music.”²⁹

Although it is possible that black culture, oral contraceptives, particular books, magazines, films, and sexual ground broken in the 1920s, affected the onset of the counterculture, their influence is difficult to assess. A survey of the underground press demonstrates that these factors are not cited or discussed by hippies. One can pinpoint the rise of the counterculture based on a close analysis of the hippies’ recurring grievances in the underground newspapers.

²⁹ Landon Y. Jones, *Great Expectations: America and the Baby Boom Generation* (New York, 1980), 61; Jeff Greenfield, *No Peace, No Place* quoted in Jones, *Great Expectations*, 63.

CHAPTER III

THE WHEELS SET IN MOTION: 1948-1961

In the late 1960s, a hippie reminiscing on his formative years a decade earlier, said, “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.”³⁰

Many others looked at their upbringing in the same manner. Growing up in conformist suburban America in the 1950s influenced some youths who eventually formed the counterculture. When they were adolescents, they lived in houses distinguishable only by color, and watched as their parents strived to “keep up with the Joneses,” buying millions of cars, television sets, high fidelity stereos, and patio-furniture sets. Parents groomed their kids for success, expected them to compete with their peers in athletics, academics, and get into prestigious universities. Their elders also presumed that youth conformed to standards of propriety in dress, speech, and conduct. In this environment, many felt like “helpless victims, deprived of privacy, of individuality, and, perhaps most grievously. . . excitement.” Those who “felt alone, alienated from society, separated from one another,” would seek out “a genuine community based on morality and love” in the coming decade.³¹ “God,” “mother,” “apple pie,” “the world of Walt Disney,” and the complacency of the 1950s angered many baby-boomers. “I cut my eye teeth on Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse,” said

³⁰ Leonard Wolf with Deborah Wolf, *Voices from the Love Generation* (Boston, 1968), 216.

³¹ John Morton Blum, *Years of Discord: American Politics and Society, 1961-1974* (New York, 1991), 94.

one. “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.” Walt Disney turned out to be a right-winger who had a “saccharine, sentimental approach to life.”³² The 1950s, for some hippies, embodied everything that was wrong with the country; it was what they rebelled against.

Hippies would read books published during this period, and one was authored by Norman O. Brown. His *Life Against Death* (1959) became an underground classic, arguing that man repressed his animal instincts. He called for a “polymorphous perversity,” a term used by Sigmund Freud, which entailed the “union of many bodies,” rejecting Western civilization’s prescribed sexual conduct—monogamy, genital intercourse, and heterosexuality. Brown also wrote on discovering the unconscious, and creating the “Dionysian Ego,” where one could find affirmation in life and know no boundaries.³³ An older hippie who taught English at San Francisco State College told an interviewer that “if we were free, sex would be for us. And it doesn’t have much to do with genitalia. That’s just one place. It’s polymorphous.”³⁴ Some did not fully comprehend Brown’s message, but it made an impression on them nonetheless. For author Morris Dickstein, reminiscing on his adolescence, *Life Against Death* “meant not some ontological breakthrough for human nature but probably just plain fucking, lots of it.” Brown’s book “seemed to promise that good times were just around the corner.”³⁵

³² John Raymond, “M. Mouse Dies at 65,” *Berkeley Citizen*, 23 December 1966.

³³ Matusow, *The Unraveling of America*, 278-279; see also Roszak, *The Making of a Counterculture*, ch. 3.

³⁴ Wolf, *Voices from the Love Generation*, 72.

³⁵ Morris Dickstein, *Gates of Eden: American Culture in the Sixties* (New York, 1977), 82.

Other writers also made an impression on the hippies. Richard Fairfield's *The Modern Utopian* saw B.F. Skinner's *Walden Two* (1948) as a model for an experimental community. Aldous Huxley's *Island* (1962), according to Fairfield, provided insight into the LSD experience.³⁶ Joseph Heller's book *Catch-22* (1961) critiqued military institutions and the madness of war. A hippie angered at the "repressive university" wrote, "Like the army in *Catch-22*, the University of Missouri 'disappears' people. One day you see them; next day you don't."³⁷

These books were important because they articulated how the young felt about society. The Beats also ridiculed the society in which future hippies came of age and most scholars point to them as precursors to the counterculture. Allen Ginsberg, Gregory Corso, Gary Snyder, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, and Jack Kerouac detested 1950s Cold War culture, its complacent suburbs, its political rhetoric, and the silent generation. They mingled together in Beatnik enclaves in Greenwich Village in New York and the North Beach district of San Francisco. The beats distrusted American authorities and religious institutions—McCarthyites, the CIA, Christianity. They favored dark clothing, grew beards, talked hip lingo, hitch-hiked all over the country, smoked marijuana, read poetry, engaged in orgies. The Beats disliked everything conventional, including mainstream entertainment and boring occupations. They opted for "the outlaw spirit," looking for "authentic" experiences, which they associated with working class whites and poor minorities. They foreshadowed the counterculture with their interest in

³⁶ See *Modern Utopian* (Berkeley), May? 1966.

³⁷ Steve Fuchs, "What's to be Done?" *Free Press Underground* (Columbia, MO), October 1967.

alternative spiritualities like Buddhism and Hinduism, their adherence to “beloved communities,” and their visions of liberation and hedonism.³⁸

The Beats influenced a few who became central icons to the counterculture. Bob Dylan, who had read *Howl* by Ginsberg and Ferlinghetti’s *Coney Island of the Mind*, departed from the University of Minnesota in 1961 to live in Greenwich Village, a place where beat culture flourished.³⁹ Tom Hayden, one of the most important of New Left activists, traveled to San Francisco in 1960 after reading Jack Kerouac’s 1957 novel *On the Road*. A young poet and artist, Jim Morrison, found *On the Road* fascinating, scribbling passages from it down in his notebooks. Timothy Leary, who began LSD experiments on Harvard students in 1960, admired Ginsberg and other Beat writers.⁴⁰

Although rarely mentioned by freaks in the underground sources, a few of the rank and file viewed the Beats as mythic figures. One young writer from the Midwest made the trek to San Francisco in 1964 in search of “landmarks” he first read of in *On the Road*. Not sure if the character Dean Moriarty existed or not, he asked, “Was there really such a person?” The author covering the story for *Open City Press* in 1964 thought Kerouac’s novel defined the Beat Generation, but neglected to articulate what it meant to the emerging counterculture. He assured the traveler seeking out landmarks that Neal Cassady was “still around young man.”⁴¹ An unknown author in 1966 emulated the Beats, “riding a piggy-back from Boston to New York” on his way to

³⁸ Isserman and Kazin, *America Divided*, 154.

³⁹ Howard Sounes, *Down the Highway: The Life of Bob Dylan* (New York, 2001), 63.

⁴⁰ James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945-1974*, The Oxford History of the United States, Vol. X. (New York, 1996), 410; Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York, 1987), 52.

⁴¹ No author, “Moriarty Lives!” *Open City Press* (San Francisco), 6-12 December 1964.

Chicago. He traveled for experience. Although traveling could be dangerous, so was life, “a win or lose game with happiness and personal fulfillment as the stakes, ways of living as the rules.” Ultimately, for this traveler, “security” had to come within himself; he could not spend his time worrying about material survival.⁴²

Although some, like those mentioned above, were directly influenced by the Beats, it is unlikely that many dropped out because of Beat literature. The Beat influence has been overestimated. They numbered anywhere from a few hundred to a thousand. A mere 150 wrote anything.⁴³ By 1961, the Beats had been broken up and scattered in San Francisco, the victims of police persecution and harassment. Their former hangout in the North Beach had turned into a tourist trap. Furthermore, the beats looked down on the “imitation bohemians” in the area—“hippie” meant “junior-grade hipster,” a demoting term. The hippies, to the serious bohemians, wasted time getting stoned and having fun; they did not engage in intellectual pursuits like writing poetry or listen to jazz. Many of the Beats, now in their 30s or 40s, disregarded the younger bohemians, who had no name for themselves.⁴⁴

Some Beats, certainly, would take part in the counterculture, most notably of course, Alan Ginsberg. But others, Jack Kerouac for example, did not know what to make out of the new counterculturalists. In 1964, Ken Kesey and his Merry Pranksters made their fabled journey from the West Coast to New York City. When they arrived, Neal Cassady, the infamous Dean Moriarty in *On the Road*, arranged a meeting between

⁴² No author, “Getting Used To It,” *The Fifth Estate* (Detroit), 30 July 1966.

⁴³ Patterson, *Grand Expectations*, 410.

⁴⁴ Charles Perry, *The Haight-Ashbury: A History* (New York, 1984), 5; Wolfe, *Hippies*, 19.

Kerouac, Kesey, and his followers. When Kerouac saw the bus, its flashing lights, blaring rock music, and American-flag draped sofa, he wondered aloud if Kesey and his group were communists. Kerouac folded up the American flag, and later, went to live with his mother in Massachusetts. Writer Tom Wolfe saw this meeting as symbolic, “a passing of the guard.” “Kerouac was the old star. Kesey was the wild new comet from the West heading Christ knew where.”⁴⁵

The torch had been passed indeed. The hippies did not directly grow out of the Beat movement, nor did it take hallucinogenic substances to complete the metamorphosis from beat to hippie.⁴⁶ Although the Beats and other authors influenced some, as did coming of age in the 1950s, the events and developments that directly affected youths in the 1960s caused the counterculture to grow exponentially. As historian Terry H. Anderson has noted, “Without racism, war, and campus paternalism, the population of hippiedom would have been proportionately about the same size as the beats in postwar society.”⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Tom Wolfe, *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (New York, 1967), 103.

⁴⁶ Direct outgrowth is argued by John C. McWilliams, *The 1960s Cultural Revolution*, Guides to Historic Events of the Twentieth Century (Westport, CT, 2000), 65; Metamorphosis is argued by Matusow, *The Unraveling of America*, 287.

⁴⁷ Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties*, 248.

CHAPTER IV

THE FIRST CRUCIAL YEARS: 1962-1964

Prior to this period, few opportunities existed for collective social and reform movements. Most young adults prepared themselves for defined gender roles. Men expected to be providers for their families, women homemakers. This all changed in the 1960s, when students and other youths became excited about the possibilities of changing the world and their country. Over 76 million babies were born between 1946 and 1964. The first of this generation would arrive in massive numbers at universities in 1964, and post-war affluence allowed for many to remain in the university system for years. The college population tripled from 1960 to 1972, from three to ten million. The “youth” stratum of society possessed the potential to become a major social and political force.

This potential became a realization during and after the Cuban Missile Crisis. In August 1962, American U-2 spy planes flying over Cuba discovered operational SAM sites and medium range bombers with nuclear capabilities. In September, President John F. Kennedy confronted Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, warning him publicly and privately to refrain from putting their missiles in Cuba. Although Khrushchev denied that any such thing was happening, American spy planes in October confirmed that missile sites were in the process of being constructed. On October 22, Kennedy addressed the nation, telling the people that the Soviets had the power to strike the Western Hemisphere with nuclear weaponry. He also warned that any such attack would incur a “full retaliatory response” from the U.S. The world held its breath for a few days. When Soviet ships carrying additional offensive military equipment to Cuba

encountered the U.S. Navy's "quarantine," they turned back toward Russia. The crisis was over, and people all over the world were grateful.

The Cuban Missile crisis alarmed the young. In the Midwest and in Northern California, those in opposition to the Cold War consensus began publishing pamphlets, newsletters, and underground newspapers 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. It scared and disgusted young adults to realize that the extermination of "millions of human beings . . . in a space of a few hours," had become as "acceptable as television, Coca-Cola and tranquilizers. Preservation of civilization has become equated with destruction, as men face reality by burrowing into the earth. Life has become death. Peace means war. Defense means retaliation." And those in power had accepted the possibility of apocalypse. Leaders "declared weapons of mass destruction to be acceptable; that there is nothing immoral in killing one hundred people than there is in killing ten. The voices of power have shouted 'Amen.'" ⁴⁸ Rather than continue living in an outrageous society where a complacent population and its institutions backed useless leaders bent on destroying the world, some youths began looking for alternatives.

Nuclear annihilation weighed heavily on the minds of baby-boomers and those born during World War II. An activist writing in one of the first underground publications called for political action: "Students must let it be known that they do not

⁴⁸ No author, "Age of Insanity," *Sanity* (Madison), Winter 1962.

choose to be the last generation of *Homo sapiens*.”⁴⁹ The 64 page *Port Huron Statement* (1962), regarded as the manifesto of the New Left, and written mostly by Tom Hayden, articulated the Cold War fears of a generation: “we ourselves, and our friends, and millions of abstract ‘others’ we knew more directly because of our common peril, might die at anytime.”⁵⁰ Todd Gitlin appraised the power of nuclear weaponry and the impact it had on the New Left, although his comments apply equally to the incipient counterculture: “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.”⁵¹

An opposition to the “status quo” mounted. A divided world dominated by the two hegemonies, the United States and the Soviet Union, threatened Neo-Beatniks and activists. Nuclear confrontation thwarted the possibility of universal peace. Some youths believed that man could change the world if only the “human family,” would commit themselves to peace. Student leaders called on their compatriots to get “involved in seeking out alternatives to war.”⁵²

Other students made similar demands from the University of California. The writers of the underground leaflet *Despite Everything* in Berkeley articulated their opposition to “any and every imperialism, economic or armed.” They opposed U.S. aid to any country “for the purpose of propping up Fascist regimes,” and they argued for

⁴⁹ No author, “Editorial: The Purpose of Sanity,” *Sanity* (Madison), Winter 1962.

⁵⁰ Tom Hayden, *The Port Huron Statement: The Visionary Call of the 1960s Revolution* (New York, 2005), 46.

⁵¹ Gitlin, *The Sixties*, 23.

⁵² No author, “Editorial.”

“unilateral, permanent and unconditional cessation of every kind of nuclear testing.” Differences between the superpowers were negligible. The blocs shared a common “concern for power,” and they aimed for “stabilization, control, and division of the world.”⁵³ Why did America show aggression toward Cuba? Why didn’t American leaders work with Castro? What gave America the rights to nation build in South Vietnam?⁵⁴ American foreign policy seemed to be perpetuating the Cold War. Concerned youths agreed with those who urged friendlier relations with the country’s supposed enemies: “We must get into a dialogue with China. We can’t pretend that nearly half the people in the world don’t exist We’re in imminent danger from our own ignorance of China. China now has the Bomb. We should learn about her . . . and she’s completely ignorant about us.”⁵⁵

America had great potential, and vast resources, but leaders failed miserably at applying it. Students at the University of Wisconsin lamented this irony. Instead of using science and technology “for the betterment and progress of all mankind,” the government used it in ways that threatened the world with extinction.⁵⁶ Why couldn’t America get its priorities in line? Until it did, which seemed unlikely to numerous youths, they would be content in the making of their own communities, an environment where technology would not be used to kill or maim.

The Cold War consensus frustrated the new generation. Political outlets in the form of parties did not express their interests and they could not make their voices heard.

⁵³ No author, “Editorial,” *Despite Everything* (Berkeley), February 1963.

⁵⁴ No author, “A Little Something,” *The Other Voice* (Berkeley), July 1963.

⁵⁵ No author, “Unrealistic China Embargo Could Isolate Americans,” *Open City Press* (San Francisco), 13-19 December 1964.

⁵⁶ No author, “Age of Insanity.”

Activists started the “Vote No for President in 1964” movement in the Bay area and hoped it would spread nationwide. “Vote No” represented a protest against the Cold War consensus and the “absence of dialogue” in politics. Students planned to register a vote against Kennedy and his Republican opponent. Activists also turned their frustrations and anger on the Old Left. The liberals’ political accomplishments only brought temporary satisfaction, for they were “illusionary,” “trivial,” and “lacking overall purpose and leading nowhere.” The Old Left’s “wasteful” politics made many frustrated and decadent because they did not further the process of “growth or creation.”⁵⁷ *The Port Huron Statement* broke its ties with the Old Left when it expressed its “anti-anti-communism.” To the New Leftists, rigid anti-communism embodied much of what was wrong with the world; it served as “an ideological mask for discrediting movements for radical social change and supporting the status quo.” Getting away from anti-communism represented a step toward breaking the Cold War impasse.⁵⁸

The Free Speech Movements at UC-Berkeley and UCLA in December 1964 drove the young further away from the Old Left and their “liberal” universities. The university had once provided a safe haven for political dissent, but now it had “lost face” among its truly liberal student body. One student who had attended the rally on the Berkeley campus felt betrayed by the supposedly liberal university. “I was terrified,” he remarked. “I had planned to work for civil rights in Mississippi next February, but I wonder now what will happen to me there if this kind of thing can happen on the campus

⁵⁷ Robert Scheer, “The Politics of the One-Shot Lover,” *The Other Voice* (Berkeley), July 1963.

⁵⁸ Alan Wald, *The New York Intellectuals: The Rise and Decline of the Anti-Stalinist Left from the 1930s to the 1980s* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1987), 6.

of a 'liberal' university."⁵⁹ After the conclusion of the Free Speech Movement, Mario Savio remarked, "It will never be possible to be 'liberals' again."⁶⁰

The Cold War consensus and Old Guard liberalism troubled hipsters and leftist activists. Their reactions, however, diverged. New Left activists got more involved in the political process, determined to bring change through the system, while bohemians dropped out, finding politics largely useless.

This division between activists and cultural revolutionaries was apparent in the early 1960s. In the San Francisco Bay area, politicians found the heterogeneous composition of the left disconcerting. An opposition to consensus politics could not be mounted until the left "cleared the babble arising from the confusion of anarchists, socialists, hipnicks, dopesters, Ghandians, Russian lovers, Cuban lovers, Kenya lovers, Muslims, and Peace Ladies."⁶¹

This division would persist in the years to come, when the "heads" and "fists," as Laurence Leamer called them, would clash over the direction the youth movement was taking. New Leftists challenged the dominant culture through overtly political channels, while the hippies, not greatly interested in politics, preferred to drop out of society and favored cultural dissent. Although the two movements were ultimately distinct, they shared the idea that American society had major problems, and something needed to be done about it. But this point of harmony did not prevent the finding of fault with each other's approaches. The hippies censured activists for participating in mass movements

⁵⁹ No author, "Tragedy in Berkeley," *Open City Press* (San Francisco), 13-19 December 1964.

⁶⁰ No author, "Comments on Berkeley," *Free Student News* (New York), unknown date 1965.

⁶¹ Scheer, "One-Shot Lover."

which they distrusted. The New Left's devotion to revolution also seemed to work against the hippies' humanitarian worldview.⁶² Violence was not a viable avenue. "When you pick up a gun and learn to kill," wrote a hippie, "the part of you that loved flowers and simple things will die!"⁶³ The counterculture also thought that the New Left had forgotten about the good things in life, like pleasure.

New Leftists, too, critiqued the hippies. They were angered that people would drop out of society when so much work needed to be done politically. Some also believed drugs sapped the revolutionary energy of the movement.⁶⁴ Others attacked hippie values. "Love is a good thing," wrote an activist, "but hatred of what is hateful is as necessary and important." The psychedelic revolution was "not a revolution in any sense of the word." Activists saw dropouts as merely trying to escape from world problems. The cultural route was "sterile and infantile" because it did not transform restrictions imposed on the young that "afflicted" and "affected" them.⁶⁵

The heads and fists did agree that the Establishment press left something to be desired. The first underground newspapers and newsletters in Berkeley and San Francisco arose in reaction to the Establishment press; they provided a "means of communication among the loose conglomerate of people around San Francisco who find themselves for one reason or another disaffected from the establishment." The

⁶² Miller, *Hippies and American Values*, 10-12.

⁶³ Mick Wheelock, "Is Love Dead?" *Los Angeles Free Press*, 22 November 1968.

⁶⁴ Miller, *Hippies and American Values*, 12-14.

⁶⁵ "Marxist Scholar Opines on Hips" (interview with George Novack of Socialist Workers Party), *Berkeley Barb*, 12-18 May 1967.

mainstream press provided a version of life that “slowly poisoned the spirit.” Dissenting viewpoints did not get through.⁶⁶

Heads and fists also assaulted Cold War American society and everything they saw wrong with it. They wanted to ensure their civil liberties, and rallied against vestiges of McCarthyism. They called for an end to loyalty oaths and the House of Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC).⁶⁷ Hipniks and students firmly believed that one should be free to express any political viewpoint, no matter how controversial. The hip found it easier to communicate on the fringes of society.

The first dropouts, even if they did not become politically involved, followed the civil rights movement intently. *The Port Huron Statement* addressed the issue of race. Hayden wrote that most of his generation matured into complacency because they lived in the strongest and wealthiest country in the world. Then, “human degradation, symbolized by the Southern struggle against racial bigotry,” spurred the young into action.⁶⁸ Many were angered that the country was “frightened and petulant over the current black revolution.”⁶⁹ They demanded that the federal government guarantee racial equality, and the ability to register to vote.⁷⁰ They followed the massive march on Washington led by Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1963. Others hoped urban renewal programs would make living conditions better for blacks. Discriminatory hiring

⁶⁶ No author, “Whose Other Voice?” *The Other Voice* (Berkeley), July 1963.

⁶⁷ No author, “A Little Something.”

⁶⁸ Hayden, *The Port Huron Statement*, 45.

⁶⁹ Scheer, “One-Shot Lover.”

⁷⁰ No author, “A Little Something.”

practices irked many.⁷¹ They could not understand how a nation calling itself “the land of the free,” could continue to politically and economically enslave an entire segment of its population.

Activists pressed for the legalization of social drugs in the mid-1960s, especially marijuana. For many heads, laws governing the use of the drug were unconstitutional. They felt that the majority in society feared it “because they don’t know anything about it.” Drug addicts should not be treated as criminals, especially if they did not harm anyone but themselves. In August 1964, protestors numbering between 50 and 250 picketed around Union Square in San Francisco holding placards that read, “Justice Now For Marijuana,” and “Marijuana is Wholesome.” James R. White announced the nation’s first “puff-in” which would challenge California’s drug laws. The plan called for 1,000 people to light up in the police station in San Francisco. People could not understand how “cancer causing tobacco” could be marketed freely, while marijuana remained illegal.⁷² The dominant culture did not understand that dope was good, fun, and harmless, and its “continued illegality was proof that lying and/or stupidity was a cornerstone of government policy. When the young got high, they “saw through the great hoax, the cover story concerning not only the narcotics laws but the entire system.”⁷³ Laws banning dope only made the young more critical of the Establishment, while pushing first time drug users toward the counterculture.

⁷¹ No author, “Pickets Are CORE’s Gift to 35 Stores,” *Open City Press* (San Francisco), 6-12 December 1964.

⁷² No author, “A Little Something.”; No author, “Pot Goes to California Courts,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 24 September 1964.

⁷³ Martin A. Lee and Bruce Shlain, *Acid Dreams, The Complete Social History of LSD: The CIA, The Sixties, and Beyond* (New York, 1985), 129.

Equally frustrating was society's attitudes toward what constituted "obscenity," and its intransigent censorship laws. The hip wanted "extension of support to the arts and artists without prejudice to that which is new just because it is new."⁷⁴ From the perspective of the hip, a "laissez-faire" attitude toward the new, artistic, and experimental whether it be in film, art, or poetry was in order. Why should the Establishment decide what is "smut" or "obscene"? Authorities used obscenity laws as a means to suppress political dissent. Hip youths believed people should be endowed with the right to show films containing anti-fascist messages, nudity, and homosexuality.⁷⁵

The politics and values surrounding sexuality were also apparent during these early years. Laws inhibited sexual freedom. Hipsters advocated legalized abortion and access to birth control for all.⁷⁶ From their perspective, "sexual frustration" and "sexual hypocrisy" warped the minds of everyone. Victorian sexual mores needed to disappear, for the young did not want their sexual rights curtailed by what society deemed appropriate sexual conduct. The earliest hippies attacked monogamy. A writer for San Francisco's *Open City Press* covered the story of a "promiscuous housewife" who, although older than the hippies (she was 40), succinctly summed up their attitudes toward sex: "Monogamy as we practice it is mostly a matter of fear and selfishness . . . a refusal to allow your partner to experience joy in loving all mankind." Monogamy made for a "sour, unloving person."⁷⁷

⁷⁴ No author, "A Little Something."

⁷⁵ Seymour Stern, "Puritanism Scores Victory," *Los Angeles Free Press*, 25 May 1964; No author, "Film Battle Still On," *Open City Press* (San Francisco), 20-27 December 1964.

⁷⁶ No author, "A Little Something."

⁷⁷ No author, "Promiscuous Housewife on Sexual Selfishness," *Open City Press* (San Francisco), 20-27 December 1964.

The Free Speech Movement (FSM) at the University of California-Berkeley in the fall of 1964 revealed the problems in American Cold War society. Although a political movement, FSM attracted social dropouts, those who usually hung around the campus and took a class once in a while.⁷⁸ Social radicals may have been more interested in “writing, painting, good sex, good sounds, and free marijuana,” wrote “gonzo” journalist Hunter S. Thompson, but they did not “mind lending their talents to a demonstration here and there, or even getting arrested for a good cause.”⁷⁹

The Berkeley FSM began in the fall of 1964 when the dean of students issued a proclamation banning the dissemination of political material on the twenty-six foot sidewalk known as the Bancroft strip that led up to the entrance of campus. Some 500 students, determined to preserve their first amendment rights, occupied the administration building for a night. When dawn broke, the police arrested eight of the demonstrators and then released them. Students waited for the university to change its position on the matter. After a few days, with no word from the administration, they resumed political activity on the Bancroft strip in defiance. Campus police, supported by city police outfits, arrested former student Jack Weinstein as he distributed literature. Demonstrators prevented the squad car carrying Weinstein from leaving campus, surrounding it for thirty-two hours. Graduate student Mario Savio then went to converse with university president Clark Kerr about Weinstein’s release. On the night of October 2, Kerr agreed to set Weinstein free, and also implemented a plan which would transfer the Bancroft strip back to the city so that it could be legally used for solicitation. The

⁷⁸ Lee and Schlain, *Acid Dreams*, 128.

⁷⁹ Hunter S. Thompson, “The Nonstudent Left,” in *The Great Shark Hunt* (New York, 1979), 403.

turmoil seemed to subside over the next few days until students learned that Mario Savio and others had been brought up on charges for violent acts. Student leaders demanded that the charges be dismissed. When the regents declined, FSM organized a sit-in that drew 6,000 students. About 1,000 people then marched to Sproul Hall, occupying it. Students organized a free university before police arrested 814 demonstrators, who were hauled off to jail. Most of the students got bailed out quickly, some by faculty members. Within a few days, angered over the jailings, 16,000 people, including undergraduates, teaching assistants, and faculty members, brought daily campus life to a complete halt. On strike, Jack Weinstein coined the phrase, "Don't trust anyone over thirty." Before the campus broke for Christmas break, the faculty passed a resolution that endorsed most of FSM's demands. Satisfied that the administration was "better informed now about the true nature of civic responsibility," campus life returned to normal.⁸⁰

FSM at Berkeley certainly pertained to free speech, but something more serious unsettled the demonstrators: they were unwillingly becoming a part of a "machine." Inquiring students had discovered passages in the book "The Uses of the University" written by president Clark Kerr. In the book, Kerr detailed the role of the university and its relationship to the military-industrial complex. Students and hipsters deciphered the true meaning of Kerr's book. Soon, the university would become "indistinguishable from any other business enterprise." Professors resembled business managers, becoming the "intellectual servicemen" for the ruling powers and power structure. Universities helped further the Cold War, the space race, and upheld the status quo. Faculty and

⁸⁰ No author, "CAL Returns to 'Normal,'" *Open City Press* (San Francisco), 6-12 December 1964.

administrators acted as managers, students the managed. The multiversity had become the “New Slavery,” “knowledge factories” where students were “a number on a set of file cards that go through an IBM machine.”⁸¹ Savio made his famous speech, indicting the University for using students as “raw materials”:

There is 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 bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus and you've got to make it stop.⁸²

Students and hipsters resisted becoming numbers. All individuals, they wanted their humanity respected. A striker carried a placard that expressed this sentiment well. It read, “I Am A UC Student: Do Not Fold, Spindle, or Mutilate.” Youths attending college and the first dropouts resisted their incorporation into the machine and system.

Students involved in the FSM partook in the same activities and held the same world-view as those within the nascent counterculture. The night that Sproul Hall was occupied, students dropped LSD, smoked marijuana, and made love on the roof of the building. They had created “an embryonic version of the future society, the ‘beloved community’” that many a longhair already envisaged.⁸³

The Free Speech Movement at the University of California at Los Angeles unraveled simultaneously with the Berkeley movement. At UCLA, FSM participants confronted the administration on the basic issue of freedom of speech, but it had deeper implications. The FSM wrangled with the university over the very purpose and essence of an institution of higher learning and, more importantly, the meaning of American

⁸¹ Hal Draper, “The Mind of Clark Kerr,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, 5 November 1964; No author, “Comments on Berkeley.”

⁸² Savio quoted in Anderson, *Movement and the Sixties*, 103.

⁸³ Lee and Schlain, *Acid Dreams*, 127.

democracy. Students rejected the regulation requiring faculty sponsors to approve of off-campus speakers; they felt such a policy marred the traditions of free inquiry on which universities were supposedly established. Students also regretted the administrations efforts to harass politically radical organizations. For them, the administration ignored “the real American tradition: the right of minorities and unpopular causes to free expression. Non-controversial opinions are no test of American democracy.” Regulations resulting from fear of “embarrassing” or “dangerous” ideas needed to be eradicated. Attitudes needed to be changed so that new and unconventional ideas could be expressed freely.⁸⁴ Many youths refrained from grappling with the university bureaucracy and dropped out. They intuitively understood that by subscribing to the countercultural ethic, they would be liberated from issues that plagued students.

Like the FSM at Berkeley, Neo-Beatniks and students rejected assimilation, and faced down the machine as it related to military service and regulations. A man named Dennis Eisner, a 24 year old architectural designer had joined the army reserves to avoid the draft. When he showed up to drill wearing a beard, his superiors threatened him with active duty and a court martial if he did not conform to army regulations. “Why should a beard—once a hallmark of such military faces as U.S. Grant and Robert E. Lee now provoke such a storm,” he and others wondered? Eisner surmised that regulations in place were meant to make one “an easily interchangeable part of the social machine.”

⁸⁴ No author, “Free Speech and the Multiversity,” *Free University Press* (UCLA), Spring Semester 1965.

The reservist decided to go to court with his case; he refused to be an “interchangeable part of anything.”⁸⁵

Events discussed hitherto were the most prominent impetuses behind the making of the counterculture in the early 1960s, but a few other developments, to a lesser extent, influenced its growth, such as the assassination of Kennedy, the emergence of musicians Bob Dylan and the Beatles, and Ken Kesey’s book *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*.

The death of President Kennedy in November 1963 pushed some into the evolving counterculture. Although many disliked JFK’s politics before he was killed, his assassination shocked and saddened the baby-boom generation. It also undermined “young people’s tentative connection with the social mainstream.”⁸⁶ One young woman from New Jersey expressed how the assassination affected her: “I don’t know if you know how cynical most people of our generation have become about patriotism. When Kennedy spoke, he managed to instill a feeling of pride in me . . . It takes a great man and now he’s gone.”⁸⁷ The president’s death made some wary of “official” government investigations like the Warren Report. David Crosby, a member of the Byrds, told the crowd at Monterey Pop in 1967 that JFK had been killed by more than one gunman, that the story had been “suppressed,” and that “witnesses had been killed.” Kennedy had inspired young people, and they responded by joining the Peace Corps, getting involved in the civil rights movement, and becoming politically active. His presidency “ushered forth a new era, hopes were high for a better life for minorities; for a more just and

⁸⁵ Ed Bullins, “Beard Went But Not Fight,” *Open City Press* (San Francisco), 6-12 December 1964.

⁸⁶ Morgan, *The 60s Experience*, 173.

⁸⁷ Farber, *Age of Great Dreams*, 47-48.

idealistic America.” For some hippies his death marked the end of an era and a turning point from “activism to drop-outism.”⁸⁸

Music written during this period affected the evolving counterculture. In 1963, Bob Dylan burst onto the musical and political landscape, greatly impacting the young, activists in particular. Although his lyrics were deeply personal, he became a generational spokesperson. Todd Gitlin remarked, “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.” The folksinger’s albums *The Freewheelin’ Bob Dylan* and *The Times They Are A-Changin’*, released in 1963 and 1964 respectively, addressed racism (“The Lonesome Death of Hattie Carroll”) and Cold War ideology (“Masters of War” and “With God on Our Side”). Written in the midst of the Cuban Missile Crisis, “A Hard Rain’s Gonna Fall,” described the world in the aftermath of a nuclear war. Two of his songs, “Blowin’ in the Wind” and “The Times They Are A-Changin’,” spoke of a new generation that would bring new morals and values to a country that failed to live up to its creed. A torch had been passed and Dylan told mothers and fathers that their “old road is rapidly aging,” and to get out the way.⁸⁹

Although Dylan had more influence on the embryonic counterculture in 1963, the Beatles would eventually become more central in later years. From the moment they set foot on American soil in 1964, mothers, fathers and their children sensed a certain strength and energy in their music and personalities. Some believed they were

⁸⁸ J. Travers Devine, “Revolution – American Style,” *Grass Roots Forum* (San Gabriel, CA), 21 October 1967.

⁸⁹ Gitlin, *The Sixties*, 197-198.

dangerous. In the mid-60s they brought African-American rooted music back to its homeland, with covers of Chuck Berry's "Rock and Roll Music," the Isley Brothers' "Twist and Shout," and Larry Williams' "Dizzy Miss Lizzy." The band crossed race lines with their music and gender norms with their long hair. Some fundamentalist Christians felt threatened by the working-class mop-tops from Liverpool, charging the "Fab Four" with undermining "youth's faith in God."

The Beatles "clearly sided with the kids in their declaration of independence from their elders," often responding sarcastically to a patronizing press.⁹⁰ Hip people recognized with whom the Beatles aligned themselves. "And mockers they are," wrote one in 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."⁹¹ But this potential would not be realized immediately, for there is little evidence to suggest that the Beatles actually produced many converts for the counterculture in 1964, although most youths had a feeling that the Beatles were on their side.

Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* also had an impact on the growing counterculture. A critically acclaimed bestseller, the novel is about a wisecracking, free-spirited man named R. P. McMurphy who leads his fellow patients in the mental ward in opposition to the head nurse, Miss Ratched. Silent "Chief" Broom, one of the main characters, foreshadowed the counterculture's interest in Native

⁹⁰ Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams*, 62-63.

⁹¹ Fred Haines, "The Beatles Are Fun," *Los Angeles Free Press*, unknown date 1964.

Americans.⁹² In the end, McMurphy gets a frontal lobotomy, a victim of the authorities. Students loved McMurphy's antics and his resistance to those in charge.⁹³ Bohemians in the early 1960s instantly understood the overarching theme of Kesey's novel: the modern world and contemporary society repressed its citizens. Authorities could not be trusted for they could be destructive, making men the prey of rational, cold, and impersonal forces. Others recognized the novel's commentary on "the nearly totalitarian conditions prevailing today in our more modern and 'enlightened' mental institutions."⁹⁴ The young reveled in the novel's message that "people need to get back in touch with their world, to open doors of perception, to enjoy spontaneous sensuous experience" and resist manipulative forces.⁹⁵

Kesey himself is often acknowledged by historians assessing the origins of the counterculture. They write about the antics of Kesey and his Merry Pranksters in 1964 on his cross-country trip to meet Timothy Leary on the East coast.⁹⁶ On June 14, Kesey and thirteen others set out to cross America in his psychedelic 1939 International Harvester school bus with the word "further" painted across the front. A sign on the back read "Caution: Weird Load."⁹⁷ Neil Cassady drove most of the way loaded on amphetamines. Wrapped up in the stars and stripes, Kesey called himself "Captain Flag," and kept himself busy, paging through Captain America comic books. Speakers

⁹² Lytle, *America's Uncivil Wars*, 194.

⁹³ Farber, *Age of Great Dreams*, 181.

⁹⁴ Norman Hartweg, "Player's Ring Flies High Over the Cuckoo's Nest," *Los Angeles Free Press*, 5 February 1965.

⁹⁵ Stephen L. Tanner, *Ken Kesey* (Boston, 1983), 18.

⁹⁶ The Merry Pranksters were a group of Kesey's friends who wore long hair, masks, costumes, and body paint.

⁹⁷ Lytle, *America's Uncivil Wars*, 195.

mounted to the roof blared soul and R&B music as the bus travelled through Phoenix, Houston, and New Orleans on its way to the East coast.⁹⁸

After a meeting with beat Jack Kerouac in New York City, the Pranksters drove on to Millbrook, New Jersey to visit acid guru Timothy Leary. Everyone on the trip was excited; this would be a momentous occasion, the meeting between Leary and Kesey. But the former Harvard psychologist did not come out of his 64 room mansion to greet them. On a serious three-day acid trip, he could not be disturbed. They did eventually meet in an affable atmosphere but it was apparent that there was a massive schism in attitudes and styles between the Pranksters and Leary's International Foundation for Internal Freedom (IFIF). Serious behavioral scientists worked for IFIF; they kept records, wrote papers, and published a journal. They had "nothing to gain by associating with a bunch of grinning, filthy bums wearing buckskins and face paint." Turned off by the scholarly stuffiness, the Pranksters drove back to the West coast.⁹⁹

Kesey and his crazy coterie were important to the counterculture in that they were pioneers. But their weird behavior did not produce many converts. Most hipsters and Neo-Beatniks did not know of the Merry Pranksters outside of the San Francisco Bay area. Some read Tom Wolfe's chronicle of the fabled East coast journey in *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (1967), but by then, the counterculture was already growing at a steady pace, spreading out over the country.

⁹⁸ Barry Miles, *Hippie* (New York, 2003), 32, 36.

⁹⁹ Martin A. Lee and Bruce Shlain, *Acid Dreams*, 124.

Between 1962 and 1964, some crucial developments emerged, but the events of 1965-1966 ensured that there would be a formidable social phenomenon: the counterculture.

CHAPTER V

THE BURGEONING OF THE COUNTERCULTURE: 1965-1967

Lenore Kandel, known around the Haight-Ashbury district as the woman “who taught us how to make love,” told a researcher around 1967, “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.”¹⁰⁰ The Vietnam War, combined with other important factors during this period, would induce many young people into finding “another world,” in their counterculture.

In 1965, President Lyndon Johnson committed the first combat troops to Vietnam, and this deeply troubled many youths. Hippies hated the war, for America had lost its soul. The war was “beyond brutality,” an “obscurity,” and pure “madness.” The government coerced kids into violence. “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 hippie in Seattle.¹⁰¹ Those who resisted induction into the armed forces faced incarceration. The U.S. systematically used napalm, phosphorous, poisonous gas, and fragmentation bombs on the Vietnamese people. Many thought the war unjust, waged primarily to spread the U.S.’s sphere of influence in South East Asia, where it had no rightful place. Worse, young Americans were dying for a “delusion.” They did not fight for freedom, but only aided an “imperialist” war.¹⁰² America

¹⁰⁰ Wolf, *Voices from the Love Generation*, 28.

¹⁰¹ No author, “The Great Underground Freeway,” *Helix* (Seattle), 13 April 1967.

¹⁰² Priscilla Clark, “Vietnam – A Commentary,” *Western Activist* (Kalamazoo, MI), 20 October 1966.

destroyed the land and crops of the Vietnamese, leading to the starvation of innocent women and children. So much horror. The amount of suffering and killing was unconscionable. Each week the death toll grew and many wondered why.¹⁰³

The Vietnam conflict exacerbated existing fears. “The history of mankind has been the history of wars and the intervals between preparing for war,” wrote one from Massachusetts.¹⁰⁴ Others braced for the end of human existence. For the past twenty years, the country had been involved in “one form of a war or another.” Leaders had at best attained a “shaky peace.” “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?” wondered one individual. This Californian pondered how they would find food in a radioactive wasteland and started conjuring up plans for survival.¹⁰⁵ A hippie on the Haight in San Francisco expressed similar feelings: “one day the universe might disappear in the wink of God’s eye.”¹⁰⁶ If the world was on the verge of coming to an end, some wanted to have as much fun and pleasure as possible. Jim Morrison once told his fans, “I don’t know what’s gonna happen, but I tell you this man: I’m gonna get my kicks before the whole shithouse goes up in flames!”¹⁰⁷

“Any group of people who can easily accept murder as a way of life is sick,” a hippie woman said. “It’s no longer functional to continue on that level . . . I feel that

¹⁰³ Bernard Fall, “Vietnam: The Impersonal War,” *The Paper* (Mendocino, CA), June 1966.

¹⁰⁴ No author, “What You Know,” *Zig Zag* (Montague, MA), Unknown date, 1967.

¹⁰⁵ No author, “Survival: How to Exist After World War III,” *The Paper* (Mendocino, CA), June 1966.

¹⁰⁶ Wolf, *Voices from the Love Generation*, 139-140.

¹⁰⁷ Dialogue available on various Doors compact discs.

the forces toward survival are very strong. I don't feel it's necessary for everybody to explode and everybody die."¹⁰⁸

Vietnam made the young take a more critical look at society; the hypocrisy, ironies, and inconsistencies of the Establishment became easier to see, and provided new freaks for hippiedom. A woman discussing the war thought it "obscene" for the Johnson administration to lament atrocities committed against U.S. troops while America tortured and murdered Viet Cong prisoners, and dropped napalm, gas, and bombs on the Vietnamese populace.¹⁰⁹ Inconsistencies relating to America's founding and ideology unsettled the young. America's founders were dissidents, but now the country looked with scorn upon the aspiring cultural revolutionaries, fearing rebellion and change. The wealthiest country in the world, the government and citizens did not adequately aid those living in squalor. Instead, millions of dollars went toward the appropriation of more guns and bombs to kill people half-way around the world. America had failed to keep the promises set forth in the Constitution and Emancipation Proclamation, denying people of color their full rights and equality.¹¹⁰

Hypocrisy was not limited to the Establishment. Hypocritical Americans angered the young. The same people who favored the war sent their friends and relatives Christmas cards proclaiming "Peace on Earth." The same people would probably attack a neighbor who put a "Peace on Earth Now" sign up in their yard.¹¹¹

Older people ridiculed the liberal sexual ethics of the young, but also transgressed. "The

¹⁰⁸ Wolf, *Voices from the Love Generation*, 29.

¹⁰⁹ Dena Clamage, "Views," *The Fifth Estate* (Detroit), 30 July 1966.

¹¹⁰ Bob Cook, "The Meaning of the American Revolution," *AIM* (New Haven, CT), 12 July 1966; No author, "Welfare Protest," *AIM* (New Haven, CT), 12 July 1966.

¹¹¹ Phineas P. Quimby, "The Lone Dissenter," *Berkeley Citizen*, 23 December 1966.

hypocrisies are more and more apparent. [Young people] look at their parents—they're lying to each other. They're married for thirty years" and then "they go out and fuck other people," said a woman living on the Haight.¹¹² Hypocrisies relating to dope were obvious, as elders warned against their use, and then imbibed large quantities of alcohol which was just as harmful as dope.

Hypocrisies and ironies in relation to Jesus and Christianity were especially disturbing. The majority claimed to be Christians, but supported wars and killing and opposed those who actually followed the teachings of Christ, a "radical sort of character who told people to love one another and live together in peace."¹¹³ If Jesus had been around in the late 1960s, he would have been "WANTED" by law enforcement for practicing medicine without a license, "loitering" around synagogues, and wearing "typical hippie attire—long hair, robes, and sandals." Christ would have been an "anti-war demonstrator" who had "visions," probably "hallucinatory, caused by drugs." Hippies and students laughed when reading satire printed in the underground paper *F.T.E!* In a satirical interview conducted by talk radio host Joe Pyne, he accused Jesus of "interfering with Free Enterprise" and called him a "radical" for "driving money lenders out from the Holy Shrine."¹¹⁴

To the evolving counterculture, the majority in America were unbearably intolerant. Older people became suspect. "They want to disguise their weaknesses as propriety and therefore, they must label the robustion [sic] of the young as

¹¹² Wolf, *Voices from the Love Generation*, 28.

¹¹³ Jolm Raymond, "Yes, Virginia, There's a \$anta," *Berkeley Citizen*, 23 December 1966.

¹¹⁴ No author, "Joe Pyne Interviews Jesus Christ," *F.T.E!* (Los Angeles), March 1967.

foolhardiness,” wrote one freak.¹¹⁵ Hippies did not want to be persecuted by “super-patriots.” “Subversive is not necessarily Un-American, or Anti-American,” wrote one in Cleveland. “We are trying to grow, to be free to establish our own values, we are not trying to overthrow the Government.”¹¹⁶ Restaurants and other establishments discriminated against longhairs. The district manager of a Big Boy chain in Milwaukee said that he would fight to keep “those kids” out of his burger joint.¹¹⁷ In high schools, teachers went after students who looked different: “My physical education teacher threatened me physically, pushed me up against a locker, and said, ‘You’d better get a haircut.’”¹¹⁸

Police brutality and harassment also boosted the counterculture during these years. In San Francisco, street dwellers incurred the wrath of the police force; cops arrested anyone they thought “linked” to the drug market, often innocent bystanders. Heads demanded justice: “LET’S START HEARING ABOUT THE REAL CRIMINALS IN THIS TOWN BEING ARRESTED WHETHER THEY BE POLICE OR OTHERWISE.”¹¹⁹ On college campuses, police hassled students over parking policies, making them question authority and the character of those who wielded it. “There’s something about a uniform,” wrote a student in Kansas City. “Either the uniform has some hidden magic Circe-power that turns men into—uh—reasonless

¹¹⁵ No author, “Fads, crazes, and Graffiti Art,” *Graffiti* (Philadelphia), 24 December 1966.

¹¹⁶ No author, “Watch Out for George J. Moscarino: Cultural Assassin #1,” *Swamp Erie Pipe Dream* (Cleveland), May 1967.

¹¹⁷ Robert Reihnan, “Bigot Boy vs. the Hippies,” *Kaleidoscope* (Milwaukee), 6-19 October 1967.

¹¹⁸ Joan Morrison and Robert K. Morrison, *From Camelot to Kent State: The Sixties Experience in the Words of those Who Lived It* (New York, 1987), 203.

¹¹⁹ No author, No title, *Vanguard* (San Francisco), November 1966.

animals or the idea of wearing a uniform appeals only to reasonless animals in the first place.”¹²⁰

Police harassment and brutality occurred on the Sunset Strip in Los Angeles in November 1966. The unrest started early in the summer. Freaks hung out at Pandora’s Box, a small coffee shop on the Strip where people read poetry and played folk music. In an effort to widen the street, city planners decided to demolish the shop and sent the owners an eviction notice. Hippies resisted, thronging the sidewalks, blocking entranceways, and halting traffic. Some store owners complained, and police responded in earnest, beating customers bloody.

Then, on the night of November 12, Pandora’s Box closed its doors for the final time. A thousand protestors dressed in beads, face-paint, fringed jackets, and other hip apparel demonstrated against curfew laws. Singers Sonny and Cher sat down in the street with others, causing massive traffic jams. Two busloads of cops arrested 300 people, including Peter Fonda. Demonstrators overturned cars, threw rocks, and set fire to a bus. Stephen Stills of L.A. rock band Buffalo Springfield wrote the famous song “For What Its Worth.”¹²¹

There’s something happening here
 What it is ain’t exactly clear
 There’s a man with a gun over there
 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
 Gettin’ so much resistance from behind

¹²⁰ No author, “Campus Cops,” *The Screw* (Kansas City, MO), 8 November 1967.

¹²¹ Miles, *Hippie*, 140, 145.

I think it's time we stop children
 What's that sound?
 Everybody look what goin' down

Confrontations with police confirmed for hippies what they already suspected:

The Establishment and its henchmen were the Gestapo.

Hippies railed against the Establishment. “There are commercial Big Lies, political and legislative Big Lies, industrial Big Lies, State Department Big Lies, religious Big Lies, Big Historical Lies, educational Big Lies,” wrote a longhair in Pennsylvania.¹²² It had become “US versus THEM,” declared the *Chicago Seed*.¹²³ Champions of the status quo were THEM. The Establishment wielded great power, and much was at stake. “If we are not physically destroyed or imprisoned,” wrote a hippie in the *East Village Other*, “our lives will be contaminated by the society—they will not become like us—we will become like them.” The Establishment concerned itself with maintaining its power, and used it in sinister ways. “Politicians, the state . . . the big and petty bureaucrats, the bad teachers, sadistic cops, soldiers trained to kill” wanted to coerce individuals. The hippies resisted. “Who would want to coerce individuals eight hours a day when he could be walking in the woods, fucking, painting, making a useful and artistic object, growing beautiful food, making music, thinking, writing, talking to friends, helping cure the sick.” The scaffolding of the power structure and everything associated with it or affected by it imposed on youths:

“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 power,

¹²² No author, “The Eternal Phlegm,” *The Minisink Bull* (Dingman’s Ferry, PA), 23 November 1966.

¹²³ No author, “Radio Free America,” *The Chicago Seed*, Unknown date, 1967.

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.”¹²⁴

Those who did not already adhere to the countercultural lifestyle and ethic began to perceive the country as “Amerika” and the “Death Culture,” dropping out, spreading the hippie movement across the continent.

Many youths singled out the government and its leaders as sources for discontent. “This country is supposed to be a democracy—but there is no real control over one’s own life,” wrote someone from Buffalo, New York.¹²⁵ While the government made war, drafted kids, and the bureaucracy grew, the young wondered “What say does the public have about these pressing issues?” and “Who are these men in Washington supposedly representing us?” To them, politicians did not care about people. They were nothing more than “manikins spouting lies and banalities to attain office.”¹²⁶ Democracy was a sham. The government did not face up to the problems of the nation, the future, or the facts. Hippies resisted “hypocritical officialdom” and “empty politics.”¹²⁷ Some felt it better to drop out than to continue wasting energy on the political front.

Campus paternalism or “in loco parentis” angered students. The university was “an institution of repression.” Petty rules and regulations governed every aspect of students’ lives; they lacked autonomy. Rules dictated where one ate, lived, slept, and what one wore. Rules and regulations also imposed on relations between men and

¹²⁴ No author, “Politics of Love,” *East Village Other* (New York), 7-15 May 1967.

¹²⁵ No author, “To the Students,” *The Buffalo Insider* (Buffalo, NY), 25 September 1967.

¹²⁶ No author, “Will You Join Up,” *The Call* (Madison), unknown date, 1967.

¹²⁷ Gordon Burnside, “The New Free Press,” *Free Press Underground* (Columbia, MO), October 1967.

women. The administration put “heavy hands upon those men and women who have the temerity to want to go to bed together.”¹²⁸ Females lived in “detention” homes “with a system of penalties and penances, of ‘minutes and hours.’” Men felt women’s dormitories resembled a “bizarre puritan harem in which the worst features of the covenant and the whorehouse are combined.”¹²⁹ Same-gender-loving persons were not safe as administrations tried to “vigorously purge homosexuals.”¹³⁰ Students had to know their place. They had to know how to follow orders. Faculty told them “what to read, what to write,” and “what’s true and what isn’t.” When a “teacher says jump, students jump,” wrote a sympathetic instructor at California State-Los Angeles. Students began identifying with blacks after articles circulated on campuses proclaiming that students were “niggers.”¹³¹

Like campus paternalism, the bureaucracy and curriculum of the universities had a tendency to frustrate. The University of Texas at Austin offered programs for people who “griped about university classes or policies.”¹³² Students complained of “class standings . . . evaluated test scores and fulfillment of requirements left over from the 19th century.”¹³³ Students desired involvement in policy making. They demanded “equal student participation with faculty” on campus disciplinary councils and a revision of “outdated senate constitutions.” Students also wanted a hand in curriculum reform.

¹²⁸ Steve Fuchs, “What’s to be Done?” *Free Press Underground* (Columbia, MO), October 1967.

¹²⁹ No author, “Ideologue: Who Owns the University?” *Free Student News* (New York), unknown date, 1965.

¹³⁰ Steve Fuchs, “What’s to be Done?”

¹³¹ Jerry Farber, “The University Ghetto,” *Lux Verite* (Lafayette, IN), 1 November 1967.

¹³² Ad in *The Rag* (Austin), 17 August 1966.

¹³³ Rikki Houston, “UWM Free University,” *Kaleidoscope* (Milwaukee), 6-19 October 1967.

Some requested to be integrated into academic affairs committees.¹³⁴ Others complained that the books “are too difficult to understand without regular class meetings,” that “the instructors are never in their offices at scheduled consultation periods,” and that “exams are not a fair test of the students’ knowledge.” Some felt that the “course subject is irrelevant.” Others complained of inconsistencies in the dorm administrations.¹³⁵

The hip continued to follow the civil rights movement. The lack of justice in the country astounded them. In the Deep South, racist bigots killed blacks and then walked free, equally racist juries acquitting them.¹³⁶ “God didn’t create ‘niggers,’” wrote a hipster in Minnesota, “white men did.” Americans set out to make blacks inferior, to degrade and dehumanize them, which angered hippies and other youths.¹³⁷ The counterculture believed fervently in egalitarianism. Acceptance and integration were unquestionably a part of the hip environment. In the East Village in New York and elsewhere, blacks and Puerto Ricans could often be found hanging and conversing with bohemians and hippies.¹³⁸

Some hippies concerned themselves with the environment. They worried about the installation of nuclear facilities and the effect this would have on wildlife, fish in particular. Pumping water out of a reservoir for power generation left massive mud flats. Motor boats on lakes dumped harmful substances like oil into the water. Industry polluted the environment and depleted natural resources; industrialists were only

¹³⁴ No author, “Experimental College,” *The Free Statesman* (St. Cloud, MN), 21 September 1967.

¹³⁵ Robert M. Gerfy, “Freshman Ferment,” *Western Activist* (Kalamazoo, MI), 20 October 1966.

¹³⁶ No author, No title, *The Paper* (East Lansing, MI), 10 December 1965.

¹³⁷ Chuck Gustafson, “Straight Up and Down,” *The Free Statesman* (St. Cloud, MN), 21 September 1967.

¹³⁸ John Gruen, *The New Bohemia* (New York, 1966), 9.

concerned with making money, not the health of human beings and all other living things.¹³⁹ Hippies dropped out to look after mother earth, to protect her from the opprobrious policies of the Establishment.

Youths continued to assault America's stuffy sexual mores and practices. In San Francisco and elsewhere, the hip were angered by the "squelching" of homosexual gatherings by police.¹⁴⁰ Sexual Freedom Leagues emerged. A twenty-two year old man named Jeff Poland, after founding a League in Manhattan, moved to San Francisco and attempted to set up a chapter there. The organization promoted "more liberal attitudes toward unmarried love, abortion, and an acceptance of the sexual realities of our time." Abortion needed to be legalized so that women could be "sexually free" at last.¹⁴¹ In Austin, the Texas Student League for Sexual Freedom called for an end to "taboos" and "archaic laws" surrounding sex. The organization's policy was that "any consensual sex act between adults which did not involve force or physical harm" should not be illegal. This policy applied to fornication, sodomy, miscegenation, adultery, and statutory rape.¹⁴² Sex was not something to be feared. "Sex is very dangerous," wrote a hippie in Ohio. "Not generally for the participants, especially if young, but to the sterile and resentful social guardians."¹⁴³

¹³⁹ No author, "DRBC at Buck Hill Hug [sic] Success," *The Minisink Bull* (Dingman's Ferry, PA), 23 November 1966.

¹⁴⁰ Jeff Crabtree, "Another Homo Ball – Despite Cops," *Open City Press* (San Francisco), 13-19 January 1965.

¹⁴¹ No author, "Leader Urges Sex," *Open City Press* (San Francisco), 24 February- 2 March, 1965.

¹⁴² Gary Chason, "Sexual Freedom League: The Naked Truth," *The Rag* (Austin), 17 August 1966.

¹⁴³ Julian Kallender, "A Few Dangerous Things," *Buddhist 3rd Class Junkmail Oracle* (Cleveland), June 1967.

The establishment's definition of "obscenity" continued to frustrate the counterculture. Obscenity, as society perceived it, did not exist for the hippies. The "prejudice of the bourgeoisie who are afraid of cultural invasion by the more powerful culture of the lower strata," necessitated the invention of the term. Obscenity was simply a "home-spun soul-grinding machine manufactured by the bourgeoisie, just as they have manufactured WAR, MASS MURDER, CONSCRIPTION, TORTURE CHAMBERS OF POLICE & ATOM BOMB."¹⁴⁴

Hippies looked with disdain on the features and consequences of the capitalist system. Corrupt leaders, business leaders, and the dominant society participated in the race for more cash and material possessions, without stopping to value the most important things in life, like human relationships. "Money has become such a major objective that a man relinquishes valuable time with his children for a little more money," wrote the *Grass Roots Forum*.¹⁴⁵ While other people busied themselves obtaining possessions "that don't really contribute to a happy and meaningful life," the hippies strived "to get more out of life for less money."¹⁴⁶ Money could not bring happiness. It was up to the individual to find a meaning to life. Capitalism also encroached on the day-to-day lives of hippies, and they regretted this. The "dynamic economy" drove them "at such a feverish pace" that they faced "a lack of leisure," and "economic pressures" prevented them "from pursuing" their "own interests."¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ Malay Roy Choudhury, "In Defense of Obscenity," *Guerrilla* (Detroit), January 1967.

¹⁴⁵ J. Travers Devine, "Revolution – American Style."

¹⁴⁶ No author, "The War on Want," *The Paper* (Mendocino, CA), June 1966.

¹⁴⁷ H. Wayne Gourley, "A Utopian Answer: Walden House Plus Group Marriage," *Modern Utopian* (Berkeley), May? 1966.

The “children of the two-car garage” did not look forward to the life that lay ahead of them.¹⁴⁸ They did not want to live a boring, patterned existence. The prospect of going to college, getting married, finding a job, having children, two cars, dog and cat, and a ranch style home in suburbia seemed dreadful to many. The young sought to avoid becoming “Mr. Jones,” for he “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 Mr. Jones drinks too much. He gets pissed off a lot. He grumbles and complains a lot.” Dropping out precluded living the life of “Mr. Jones,” who “is not basically a happy man.”¹⁴⁹

Freaks traveled from place to place, spreading the word. Some looked to establish the hippie lifestyle in the new location to which they had arrived. A man who spent the summer in the Haight-Ashbury immersing himself in the “happenings” and the “rock dances at the Fillmore and the Avalon” came back to Milwaukee and was dismayed to find the hippie community lacking. There had only been “two love-ins that sputtered along” in Lake Park. “There is no reason that many of the things we hear about can’t begin to happen here,” he wrote in the underground paper *Kaleidoscope*. He encouraged others to get things moving. “All it takes is a little guts, some initiative, and a heck of a lot of love and understanding. And first of all it takes a community to support the goddamn groovy that are already around us.” Hippies like this one helped to “Start the Happenings” in various communities throughout the U.S.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ No author, “The Love Experiment In Haight,” *Avatar* (Boston), 9-22 June 1967.

¹⁴⁹ Lewis Yablonsky, *The Hippie Trip* (New York, 1968), 160-161.

¹⁵⁰ Dan Peterson, “Smile at Narcs?” *Kaleidoscope* (Milwaukee, WI), 6-19 October, 1967.

Other developments precipitated the shifting of many into the hippie camp of youthful rebels. According to the *East Village Other*, Timothy Leary's strong anti-political rhetoric, the "patent failures" of anti-war demonstrators, the "trend toward terrorism" in the civil rights movement, the "failure" of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) or "anarchists to develop fast a new viable ideology of revolution," and unviable liberal candidates, "led a large portion of the most naturally 'rebellious' and beautiful youth" out of political involvement towards hippiedom.¹⁵¹

Drug use was a salient characteristic of the counterculture. Many, probably the majority, used drugs in reaction to society. The dominant culture and society always impressed on youth the dangers involved in certain activities and they always seemed to be wrong, so youth rebelled. "When I was young, they told me sex was bad," a hippie reminisced. "I tried it, it was good; so, how do I know that drugs aren't bad until I try them?" Some used drugs as a means to escape a society that rejected them for being different. Some turned to drugs out of fear. They feared not being accepted, feared a controlling society.¹⁵²

Although the behavior of the Establishment spurred most into the counterculture, LSD and rock musicians had a prominent impact during this period. Most scholars writing on the origins of the counterculture assess the impact of Timothy Leary. Leary extolled the virtues of LSD, encouraging his followers to "Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out." Leary told his listeners to *Turn On*, to activate their "neural and genetic equipment," and to "become sensitive to the many and various levels of consciousness." *Tuning In* meant

¹⁵¹ No author, "Politics of Love."

¹⁵² No author, "Why Drugs in the Tenderloin?" *Vanguard* (San Francisco), November 1966.

“interacting harmoniously with the world around you,” externalizing and materializing and expressing one’s “new internal perspectives.” *Dropping Out* was the “process of detachment from involuntary or unconscious commitments.”¹⁵³ Underground papers frequently conducted interviews with Leary, and his ideas were disseminated to a large readership in this fashion. Bruce Hoffman responded to Leary’s message. Discontented with society, he yearned for something seemingly authentic. He talked with a friend about the exploits of Leary, became interested, and proceeded to embark on several LSD trips. Hoffman believed that psychedelics “could bring about in our culture . . . an awakening to inner values.”¹⁵⁴ Perhaps thousands turned on like Hoffman, under the influence of Leary.

Drugs alone drew some into the counterculture. Jay Thelin, along with his brother Ron, owned the Psychedelic shop in San Francisco. Both had epiphanies through the use of LSD. Jay attended a “mind-blasting” event, a lecture on LSD given at San Francisco State College by Dr. Richard Alpert. “It caused me immediately to start turning inward to look at myself as I never had before and to try LSD,” Jay recalled. LSD made integration into the counterculture easier. The hallucinogen helped him get over his reservations in relation to intimacy. “One thing was 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.” Acid also helped him shed his other insecurities: “That’s what LSD does; it makes you realize there’s nothing wrong with you, there’s nothing to be

¹⁵³ Timothy Leary, *Flashbacks: A Personal and Cultural History of an Era* (New York, 1990), 253.

¹⁵⁴ Morrison and Morrison, *From Camelot to Kent State*, 211-213.

ashamed of, these are human things, and you're all part of the same universe, the same patterns of life, and they're groovy!"¹⁵⁵

Jay's brother Ron had a similar experience. After taking acid for the first time, he began to see the problems in American society. "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 the war on." The psychedelic movement helped him to see that schools turned out "robots to keep the social system going and to keep the war going."¹⁵⁶

The hype surrounding LSD compelled some to turn on. One 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."¹⁵⁷

Some dropped out and took drugs for no solid reasons at all, having good times, and drugs were popular. One head, who had used acid as a means to expand his consciousness and get in touch with God, recalled a conversation he overheard between "teenyboppers." "I was shocked to hear these kids talking about using LSD that weekend," he said. "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

¹⁵⁵ Wolfe, *The Hippies*, 24-25.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 26.

¹⁵⁷ Morrison and Morrison, *From Camelot to Kent State*, 205.

mean, I saw it as a sacrament, and they were going to drop LSD for the sheer partying of it.”¹⁵⁸

Rock and roll expressed what many felt about American society. Its power was immense. Bob Dylan voiced the concerns of many politically active youths just a few years before, but by this time he had gone “electric,” had a big head of curly hair, and dressed in army jackets and other hipster apparel. He no longer sang “protest” folk songs, but rock and roll, appealing to a newer and much larger audience. His look had changed, but his function had not, as youths continued to look to him as a leader. Some followed him right into the counterculture, taking on the hippie persona. Dylan did not deny the impact that music had on the young. He told an interviewer that once in a while you could find someone “that can actually say, ‘Okay. I’m a changed man because I heard this one thing.’” Dylan refused to write and sing for anyone, but freaks looked to him for answers. “Total freaks” came up to him and said “How groovy you are!” before asking him questions that had been on their minds “for such a long time.” But Dylan did not relish his role as guide. He could only be himself. “I’m not going to tell them I’m the Great Cause Fighter Because I’m not, man.”¹⁵⁹

Some hippies believed the Beatles and the bands that made up the “San Francisco Sound” led the movement. A researcher asked a hippie if the Beatles were a “crucial reason for the movement?” Although he did not respond to the question directly, it was evident that the Beatles had made a significant impact. “You feel like brothers,” said the man. “You feel like you meet John Lennon, you’re going to know your friend. Any one

¹⁵⁸ Morrison and Morrison, *From Camelot to Kent State*, 213.

¹⁵⁹ Paul J. Robbins, “Bob Dylan as Bob Dylan,” *The Fifth Estate* (Detroit), 30 July 1966.

of those cats, you're going to be able to talk to them, one to one; eye to eye It's beautiful." Although the Fab Four began influencing youth in 1964, it was not until 1965 that they truly started to make their mark. They became "leaders of a new type of thought" with the release of three consecutive albums: *Rubber Soul* (1965), *Revolver* (1966), and *Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967). The Beatles' references to love and drugs in these albums, and their experimentation with transcendental meditation, prompted more than a few to turn on and drop out. Their music brought on a "fantastic evolution of consciousness," and a "change of values," a "growth in outlook extending out to everybody." Sergeant Pepper proved the most valuable and influential for the hippies: "There's a beauty. It says love. It says turn on." One freak saw the band as "models" for a generation. "Their behavior will effectively create the world of tomorrow with a speed that those unaware of the impact of the electronic media can't even begin to imagine."¹⁶⁰ Groups like the Jefferson Airplane and Grateful Dead complimented what the Beatles were doing. Their sounds provided a "new language" and the "possibilities" were "infinite."¹⁶¹

Some believed Bob Dylan, in tandem with the Beatles, gave rise to the counterculture. Maggie Gaskin, a dropout from San Francisco State, remarked, "And there was Dylan and the Beatles and they were doing that electric thing. And it sort of made us change." As their music began to evolve, hippies tried to keep pace. "They kept us running after them, and running into a happier thing, and into a more joyful

¹⁶⁰ No author, "Summit Meeting at LA Pop," *Yarrow Stalks* (Philadelphia), Unknown date, 1967.

¹⁶¹ Wolf, *Voices from the Love Generation*, 219.

thing, a more colorful thing. They were the main things that did it: The Beatles and Dylan.”¹⁶²

By the end of 1967, the counterculture was firmly established. What began as a small movement in San Francisco and the East Village in New York, spread inward, as hippies emerged in university towns and other places in the Midwest, the South, the Plains, and the Western states.

¹⁶² Ibid, 86.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The counterculture did not originate as the result of influences that have been traditionally emphasized. There is little evidence to suggest that it materialized in reaction to technological impulses or scientific forms of knowledge. The existence of similar movements throughout time adds little to the origins discourse. The “pampered youth” explanation does not account for the hippies who grew up in strict households, expected to meet particular standards that their parents and society had set forth for them. The “generation gap” thesis does not address the fact that the counterculture opposed everybody who abided by traditional American values, including many who were “under thirty.” Simply postulating that a large contingent of young people who disliked society and the Establishment does not adequately get at the nuances of this opposition. Various writers, intellectuals, the Beats, black culture, movies and magazines, and oral contraceptives might have influenced some, but their power to sway has been overestimated.

The most imperative factors that led to the emergence of the counterculture can be firmly placed in the first years of the 1960s. The Cuban Missile Crisis terrified young people in high schools and universities across the nation. Youths felt like they lived in an insane world where a premature death was an all too real possibility. Students and dropouts feared the prospect of worldwide nuclear annihilation, and railed against the Cold War and the Cold War consensus that left little in the way of political alternatives.

Old Guard liberals became targets, for they seemed to be complacent with America's foreign policy, which prolonged and entrenched the Cold War world. American society and the establishment frustrated and angered the young. It posed a danger to civil liberties and equality for minorities, while restricting freedom; the freedom to use social drugs, freedom in the arts, and sexual freedom. Most grievously, American universities and those who ran them sought to assimilate youths into the military-industrial complex, threatening one's individuality and humanity. Youths resisted becoming a part of the social machine, a cog in the system. These factors, combined with the assassination of Kennedy and the influence of musicians like Bob Dylan and the Beatles, put many on an alienation trajectory.

The fear of nuclear annihilation, racism, and society's notions of what constituted "obscenity" and proper sexual etiquette continued to disaffect youths in the years 1965 to 1967, but there were new and important developments that would cause the counterculture to burgeon. In 1965, Lyndon Johnson committed the first combat troops to Vietnam. America's involvement in the war sent those who weathered the shocks of the early 1960s spiraling further off into alienation, but the war alone, affecting those coming of age in the mid to late 1960s, produced new hippies, hundreds of thousands, if not millions. The actions of the Establishment, including its war, campus paternalism and bureaucracy, police repression, the features and consequences of capitalism, and the lack of democracy made the young more cynical, angry, disgusted. The intolerant majority and the prospect of living a conventional lifestyle further alienated youths. They began to see all the hypocrisy, ironies, and inconsistencies in American society.

The spreading of the vibes from San Francisco, the movement of disillusioned activists into the hippie camp, along with the influence of Timothy Leary, drugs, and rock musicians firmly established the counterculture by the dawn of 1968.

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