

A Longman Topics Reader

The Counterculture Reader

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New York San Francisco Boston
London Toronto Sydney Tokyo Singapore Madrid
Mexico City Munich Paris Cape Town Hong Kong Montreal

This reader is for all those who survived the Counterculture, those who perished, those who flourished, and those who would like to know what happened. And for all the generations of my family.

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PREFACE

The personal is political.

I am not a child of the sixties because I was a child *in* the 1960s. My high school and college years were spent in the 1970s and 1980s, in the aftermath of Counterculture revolutions, Vietnam, Watergate, the oil embargo, and the Iran-Contra hostage crisis. We were not rebelling, but putting together our lives with the pieces left to us. I see my generation's fears for *their* children's future in the face of random violence, terrorist attacks, and war as of this writing that reminds me of what I have read about the atmosphere of the Cold War.

Most writers about the 1960s were students and often activists "in the day." Their interests remain in the political movements of the times. As scholars, they examine manifestoes, letters, newspapers, position papers, political analyses, protests, and marches, reliving golden moments along with the horrors they experienced or watched on television. The Counterculture is often identified as "the hippies," and usually merits only a brief glance as one is returned to more serious subjects like the politics of the Left. I believe, however, that the true Counterculture encompasses both the Beats who came before the hippies and the punks who came after. True, most of the Counterculture's participants were too busy *living* to write much down. Tom Wolfe's *Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* is often used in sixties courses, but it is an observer's account, not a participant's. Still, a few rambling memoirs, poems, song lyrics, and scrapbooks remain. From these I have selected a sampling for *The Counterculture Reader*, as well as commentaries and reflections by observers. Not intended to be all-inconclusive, *The Counterculture Reader* should be viewed as a starting point from which to explore the last forty years of American culture. Students should be encouraged to read longer works, view films, look through newspaper and magazines archives, and gather oral histories from the era.

Many survivors of those years saw the Counterculture as a passing fad and only dabbled for awhile, moving on to "regular"

jobs and families. Others never participated but watched (often in amusement, some, in horror) from the sidelines. Some teach at universities and continue agendas they began in that era, or if younger, write academic articles about those days such as those in *Imagine Nation* (2002). Others, such as Peter Collier and David Horowitz, have seriously recanted their former political views, and write books critiquing the legacies they helped to begin. Parents who raised teenagers (particularly in the 1960s but through the 1970s) tell tales of cults, drug addiction and abuse, their children taken from them by forces they could not comprehend at the time. Participants are now grandparents who may hide their past or speak openly of their experiences. Frequently, I speak to people who view the Counterculture as mostly entertaining but believe that the 1950s Cold War, Vietnam, and the 1970s are best forgotten. Contemporary college students are often intrigued by the nostalgic aspects of the times—sex, drugs, and rock and roll—which they view as somehow freer, less repressive, than our own times.

While the Beats retain their *cachet* because of their literary credentials (despite numerous scathing biographies and autobiographies from spouses and children), and the punks for their connection to pop music, snow- and skate-boarding, the hippies' legacy is a bit shakier and easier to parody. The Beats and punks are cool, the hippies, lame. However we want to categorize, eulogize, and demonize the Counterculture, its predecessors and its aftermath, and although often relegated to the sideshow and the carnivalesque, it remains the most recognizable part of the period from the 1950s to the 1970s in American society.

Although the Counterculture is often viewed as *the* cultural revolution of the 1960s, we can say that, as soon as World War II ended, a few Americans were already rejecting the mainstream with its promises of peace and prosperity. Indeed, the "starving artist" phenomenon can trace its roots back to the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in England with Romantic poets such as Shelly, Keats, Wordsworth, and Coleridge. Rimbaud, Baudelaire, and the French Decadents of late nineteenth century France would inspire countless beatniks and Jim Morrison of the 1960s rock group The Doors, who took their name from Aldous Huxley's 1954 drug odyssey *The Doors of Perception*. Living on leftovers, the discards of a "post-scarcity" society, the twentieth century Counterculture looked back before the twentieth century to what they imagined was a purer world. In 1966 the Diggers started

serving the starving hordes who had come to San Francisco for the Summer of Love. Taking their name from a seventeenth century group of poor people who wanted free land to work, the Diggers set the Counterculture squarely in the history of Western civilization. Before there were hippies, there were Quakers, pacifists, bohemians, free thinkers, and free love advocates. The difference is that as soon as the Counterculture began its move against the establishment or mainstream, it became a part of it, absorbed into what would become, by the late 1960s, the biggest explosion of youth advertising in American history. Richard Goldstein, of New York's bohemian newspaper *Village Voice* commented that "The last laugh belongs to the media-men who chose to report a charade as a movement. In doing so, they created one." A Death of the Hippie mock funeral was held in San Francisco where the name "hippie" was officially disowned by its *true* denizens. Perhaps the most glaring result of the Counterculture's *revolution* is in its *commodification*. Although the hippies allegedly eschewed money, "bread" in the parlance of the times, the fashions they wore, the music they listened to, and, more darkly, the drugs they consumed generated a lot of "dough."

Several strains run through from the Beats through the hippies to the punks, and you can read this in their literature, hear it in their music. Rejecting nationalism and private property, the Beats went "on the road"; the hippies tried communal living, preached love, and sought bliss; and the punks coveted anarchy and its discontents. Nearly all of them took drugs with their alcohol; many perished from substance abuse. Some Counterculture types (a hundred groups and a few million individuals) were out to change the system (alternately known as the Establishment), which they saw as irreparably damaged. Rebellious against the Establishment (through violence or more peaceful means) appeared to them to be their only solution. As White Panther leader John Sinclair said, paraphrasing Beat writer William Burroughs, by partying down in "a total assault on the culture," the world would follow. Remembered most not for their politics but rather for their fashions, music, drugs, and sexuality, these legacies are with us still. Even more pressing is the backlash that the Counterculture has inspired, for although organic supermarkets and coffee houses have become ubiquitous reminders of the past, the Counterculture has been blamed for everything from the AIDS epidemic to low test scores in our children's schools. With international terrorism at its height, and the attacks of September 11th still fresh in our minds, *The*

Counterculture Reader brings back those “days of hope, days of rage” and the reactions to them, for better or for worse.

MAJOR COUNTERCULTURE THEMES

Fashion

The early Beats’ lack of fashion sense—wrinkled shirts and rumpled suits—soon became fashionable. And although none of the Beat writers featured here has been photographed wearing a beret, the Counterculture they inspired was soon seen donning Breton hats and carrying bongo drums.

The “flower children” and freaks dressed to enhance their freakishness, appropriating and eventually commodifying clothing from every time period and culture imaginable—Edwardian suits and pointy boots; Buddhist robes; pirate shirts and headwraps; Davy Crockett buckskins; miners’ blue jeans; Indian headbands; feathers; silver *conchas*; turquoise and beads; cowboy boots and hats. And that was just the *males*. Men had not worn their hair this long since the late eighteenth century. In his book *Hippies: A Study of Their Drug Habits and Sexual Customs*, researcher Tribhuwan Kapur finds it puzzling that hippies—Americans and Europeans from middle-class families—are dressed more ragged than the street people of New Delhi, India. Women wore variations of costumes once donned by Russian peasants, dumped their girdles and brassieres for a freer look, and wore trousers. Androgyny was in, and the term “uni-sex” appeared in fashion magazines. Of course, the high fashion world remained oblivious to women’s demands for comfort and equality, and stuck females in micro-mini skirts that featured models such as reed-thin Twiggy, just as the communes featured earth mothers who resembled solid tree trunks, not broken branches.

Punks took clothes and tore them apart, deconstructed them, wore them inside out, and fastened them (and their body parts, a precursor to the piercing fad) with safety pins. Razor blades became jewelry, and the hair was only long enough to be swept up into a Mohawk—not as a tribute to American Indians, but just to scare people.

Sex

Long before the Stonewall “Gay” Riots, Beat poets and writers were promoting the free love and sexual experimentation that

had sent Oscar Wilde to prison in the 1890s. The hippies were sensationalized in the media for promiscuity. Free love was a bit more so with the invention of the birth control pill (1961), but it remained far too one-sided to some women, as they had just begun their fight for sexual equality and reproductive freedoms. Some communes adopted strict rules about sexuality, others were laissez-faire. Cults and their charismatic leaders often exploited their members financially and sexually.

Underground comix such as *Zap* and *Rat* promoted images of transgressive sexuality that were lewd, crude, and absolutely offensive to women and most ethnic groups. Now they are expensive collector's items. As commentators lament the selling of sex in music and films in the twenty-first century, we should recall such gems as the original cover of musician Jimi Hendrix's album *Electric Ladyland* (1968), which featured numerous naked women surrounding the guitar god. And we wonder why there was a "feminist" movement?

Music

Modern jazz, particularly the type known as bebop, with its complex harmonies and rhythms, is inextricably linked to the Beats. In his "Essentials of Spontaneous Prose," Jack Kerouac even tries to emulate the music's improvisational nature in language, at times producing poetry, at others, incomprehensibility. You will often hear the phrase "You had to be there" in Counterculture narratives of the 1950s through the 1970s.

If the politicians liked folk and protest music, the hippies and the Counterculture at large throughout the 1960s chose blues-based rock as their soundtrack of choice. Returned to the America of its roots by British bands such as the Rolling Stones, what had once been termed "race music" (black music not played on white radio until Elvis Presley crossed the line and recorded the songs early in his career) was transformed by bands like the Grateful Dead and the Jefferson Airplane who created a free-form improvisational rock that claimed to take its inspiration from a drug called Acid (LSD-25).

As White Panther leader John Sinclair remarked of the MC5's proto-punk rock concerts:

So you listen to the band . . . you just go crazy and have a good time. Throw away your underwear, smoke dope, fuck. . . . Rather than go up there and make some speech about our moral com-

mitment in Vietnam, you just make 'em so freaky they'd never want to go into the army in the first place. . . .'

(JOHN SINCLAIR AND D.A. LATIMER,
UNTITLED, *EAST VILLAGE OTHER*, JUNE 4, 1969, 3.)

Drugs

For the Beats, cigarettes, marijuana, amphetamines, and alcohol were king. Kerouac suffered much from his alcoholism, in the harrowing tradition of literary forebears such as Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald. William Burroughs documented "the sickness" of heroin addiction and ran off to South America in search of yage, a potent hallucinogen. The darkness of his "drug comedies" pay homage to the medieval poet Dante and set the tone for gonzo journalist Hunter S. Thompson's sagas of chemical dependency.

As the 1950s became the 1960s, marijuana and alcohol remained popular, but the Counterculture became defined by a drug once considered for its chemical weapons potential by the U. S. Government. (The military considered dropping it in the enemy's water supplies.) In 1965, a University of California-Berkeley dropout named Augustus Owsley Stanley III began to make LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide) in a home lab. Originally called "psychodelics" for good reason, psychedelics remove the filters that the brain uses to function normally. The flood of stimuli that is unleashed produces results that range from a terrifying simulation of insanity and "having the shit beat out of you" to entering a new reality. Some people living on communes and others thought psilocybin, or "magic mushrooms," offered a natural form of high or sought peyote medicine in the American Indian culture, and the Native American Church was formed.

Having a "mindblowing" experience came with higher risks as more and harder drugs began to flood the Counterculture market. Cocaine, derived from coca leaves—chewed by some Amerindians and used by Sigmund Freud, father of psychoanalytic theory in the late nineteenth century—had been outlawed in the United States for years but found a niche in the waning years of the Counterculture and the beginning of the disco 1970s. (Disco was not a Counterculture phenomenon and thus not included in this book.) Punks rejected the hippies' love and bliss, and their music, but kept most of their illicit drugs. Utilizing alco-

hol and heroin (immortalized in films such as *Sid and Nancy* (1986)) for their “downer” qualities, the punk ethos of nihilism knew booze was cheap, heroin dangerous and addictive, and never claimed drugs would bring any kind of enlightenment. They “rediscovered” William Burroughs, but neglected to heed his advice concerning “junk” (heroin). If drugs are the answer, what was the question?

THE COUNTERCULTURE, THEN AND NOW

Item One: In the 1960s, radical leader Abbie Hoffman tried to “levitate” the Pentagon (*Steal this Book* (1971)).

In 2001, the Pentagon was nearly levelled by terrorists who hijacked an American airliner and crashed it into the building.

Item Two: In *The Sixties Papers*, Albert and Albert describe America in the 1950s as “dominated by fear, repression, and cultural superficiality . . . political conformity, political paranoia, and cold war. Government leaders and newspaper editorialists encouraged Americans to believe that Russia was preparing for a nuclear conquest of the United States.”

In 2003, the U.S. Government is passing laws influencing individuals and organizations in the interest of Homeland Security. Criticism of these laws is viewed by some Americans as unpatriotic and paranoid.

We would do well to consider some of the cultural trends of the last forty years or so as we examine our personal lives and relationships, critique images from the media, look at the United States’ role on the world stage, and discuss ways to protect our planet and its inhabitants.

E. A. SWINGROVER

despair is total! Total! We can't even talk to each other. That's what I felt in *Naked Lunch* and why I liked it."

WB: I don't remember that conversation. But I don't agree with Mr. Beckett that there are no answers. There are.

JB: But that night when I asked Beckett why he wrote, since he felt there was no communication between people, you interrupted (gently): "A reporter's question, Mr. Beckett," and Beckett just smiled and didn't answer.

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"And why do you write, Bill?" I had asked.
"To survive," you said. "To make bread."

from *Scratching the Beat Surface*

MICHAEL MCCLURE

Michael McClure was present at the very beginnings of the Beat movement, and took part in the famous 1955 "Six Gallery" reading with Gary Snyder, Philip Whalen, Philip Lamantia, and Allen Ginsberg in New York City. Later, in San Francisco, he was part of the North Beach poets and artists that centered around Lawrence Ferlinghetti's City Lights bookstore. Unlike many of the Beats, he centered his life around family and fatherhood. He has continued as a poet and playwright through the years. His recent books include *Touching the Edge* (1999), a collection of Zen dharma poems, and *Huge Dreams* (2000), a retrospective of his early Beat period. He continues to live in the Bay Area with his wife, sculptor Amy Evans McClure.



Three years before the peyote experience just described, I had given my first poetry reading with Allen Ginsberg, the Zen poet Philip Whalen, Gary Snyder, and the American surrealist poet Philip Lamantia. The reading was in October 1955 at the Six Gallery in San Francisco. The Six Gallery was a cooperative art gallery run by young artists who centered around the San Francisco Art Institute. They were fiery artists who had either studied with Clyfford Still and Mark Rothko or with the newly emerging figurative painters. Their works ranged from huge drip

and slash to minute precision smudges turning into faces. Earlier in the year poet Robert Duncan had given a staged reading of his play *Faust Foutu* (Faust Fucked) at the Six Gallery and, with the audacious purity of an Anarchist poet, he had stripped off his clothes at the end of the play.

On this night Kenneth Rexroth was master of ceremonies. This was the first time that Allen Ginsberg read *Howl*. Though I had known Allen for some months preceding, it was my first meeting with Gary Snyder and Philip Whalen. Lamantia did not read his poetry that night but instead recited works of the recently deceased John Hoffman—beautiful poems that left orange stripes and colored visions in the air.

The world that we tremblingly stopped out into in that decade was a bitter, gray one. But San Francisco was a special place. Rexroth said it was to the arts what Barcelona was to Spanish Anarchism. Still, there was no way, even in San Francisco, to escape the pressures of the war culture. We were locked in the Cold War and the first Asian debacle—the Korean War. My self-image in those years was of finding myself—young, high, a little crazed, needing a haircut—in an elevator with burly, crew-cutted, square-jawed eminences, staring at me like I was misplaced cannon fodder. We hated the war and the inhumanity and the coldness. The country had the feeling of martial law. An undeclared military state had leapt out of Daddy Warbucks' tanks and sprawled over the landscape. As artists we were oppressed and indeed the people of the nation were oppressed. There were certain of us (whether we were fearful or brave) who could not help speaking out—we had to speak. We knew we were poets and we had to speak out as poets. We saw that the art of poetry was essentially dead—killed by war, by academies, by neglect, by lack of love, and by disinterest. We knew we could bring it back to life. We could see what Pound had done—and Whitman, and Artaud, and D. H. Lawrence in his monumental poetry and prose.

The Six Gallery was a huge room that had been converted from an automobile repair shop into an art gallery. Someone had knocked together a little dais and was exhibiting sculptures by Fred Martin at the back of it—pieces of orange crates that had been swathed in muslin and dipped in plaster of paris to make splintered, sweeping shapes like pieces of surrealist furniture. A hundred and fifty enthusiastic people had come to hear us. Money was collected and jugs of wine were brought back for the audience. I hadn't seen Allen in a few weeks and I had not heard *Howl*—it

was new to me. Allen began in a small and intensely lucid voice. At some point Jack Kerouac began shouting "GO" in cadence as Allen read it. In all of our memories no one had been so outspoken in poetry before—we had gone beyond a point of no return—and we were ready for it, for a point of no return. None of us wanted to go back to the gray, chill, militaristic silence, to the intellectual void—to the land without poetry—to the spiritual drabness. We wanted to make it new and we wanted to invent it and the process of it as we went into it. We wanted voice and we wanted vision.

Note on the Religious Tendencies

GARY SNYDER

Gary Snyder is as popular a poet in the present day as he was in the Beat era. Immortalized as Japhy Ryder in Jack Kerouac's novel *Dharma Bums*, Snyder is best known for his interest in the environment and advocacy of community. His experiences as a logger and ranger in the Pacific Northwest influenced his first two collections of poetry, *Riprap* (1959) and *Myths and Texts* (1960). Currently a faculty member at the University of California at Davis, Snyder won the Pulitzer Prize for his collection *Turtle Island* (1975) and has continued writing and teaching poetry over the years.

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This religiosity is primarily one of practice and personal experience, rather than theory. The statement commonly heard in some circles, "All religions lead to the same goal," is the result of fantastically sloppy thinking and no practice. It is good to remember that all religions are nine-tenths fraud and are responsible for numerous social evils.

Within the Beat Generation you find three things going on:

1. *Vision and illumination-seeking.* This is most easily done by systematic experimentation with narcotics. Marijuana is a daily standby and peyote is the real eye-opener. These are sometimes supplemented by dips into yoga technique, alcohol, and Subud. Although a good deal of personal insight can be obtained by the intelligent use of drugs, being high all the time leads nowhere

That thing that's all there and all free
 The fretless infinite string banjo has invented new
 means of music which it
 must buy from itself to sing

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from *Hippies: A Study of Their Drug
 Habits and Sexual Customs*

TRIBHUWAN KAPUR

Examining the pilgrimages Counterculture youth make to India, social anthropologist Tribhuwan Kapur chronicles the varieties of "hippie available in India, and those that have been here since 1969 or before." Published in India in 1981, *Hippies: A Study of Their Drug Habits and Sexual Customs* discusses characteristics hippies (American and Western European) might display, and gives a non-westerner's view of the Counterculture. Although *The Counterculture Reader* presents the American Counterculture, Europeans were experiencing revolutions of their own. Notice the socio-economic groups most hippies come from as they adopt a self-imposed poverty in India, where millions of people are involuntarily impoverished.

It was felt, after much deliberation on the subject, that a hippie could best be described in a series of proposals which highlight aspects of the categories' various facets; it was felt that this would help present the necessary, though not always sufficient, properties of the hippie personality. Given below are various proposed-observable properties of such people; not all of them conform to all of the proposed properties but some of them are both necessary as well as sufficient to make a person a hippie. Our first list of the proposed personality traits of a hippie will comprise, simply, various multi-facets that one finds the category replete with. The second list will isolate those that are absolutely, inalienably their characteristics alone, and which help us move toward a definition of who or what a hippie is.

PERSONALITY TRAITS PROPOSED AS PROPERTIES OF THE HIPPIE

Given below, as propositions, are properties that hippies might, or might not, have but some of which, as mentioned earlier, are inalienable to them, and in extreme cases, are all found in a single person. It is proposed that a hippie is:

1. A person in rebellion against his own culture.
2. A person in rebellion against each and every culture.
3. A person who is, and has been, using certain drugs.
4. A person who is, and has been, using every available kind of drug.
5. A person who has sexual mores and norms overtly apart from the cultural idea of mores and norms regarding sexuality.
6. A person who has sexual mores and norms that would violate all ideas of 'normality' no matter what culture they belonged to.
7. A person who had a rich/very rich economic-cultural background, or at least a middle-class upbringing with little economic want.
8. A person, irrespective of background, who discovered within himself an apathy to or violent hatred of affluence.
9. A person who has negated, and is negating, every form of employment and is against the concept of a boss.
10. A person for whom a job is only a means to carry on with his 'real' life which is lodged in the propositions, 1 to 9.
11. A person who feels that itinerance is an essential part of life.
12. A person to whom itinerant travel is life itself, and who perceives that stabilization in terms of living in one place for a stretch of more than three to six months is 'stagnation'.
13. A person to whom 'freedom' is the essence of life and to whom all effort should be garnered around that concept.
14. A person who feels freedom is the hippie way of life, i.e., following properties given above is freedom itself.
15. A person who feels that religion needs to be reinterpreted to become truly religious.
16. A person who feels that to be free one must negate one's own religion especially if one feels that it is false, and carry on in one's quest for freedom with the help of another religion.
17. A person who perceives himself as being superior in every way to all human beings not following his way of life.

18. A person who feels he is *the* most superior being in the world and that all others are not as free as him or her; perceives himself or herself as being 'wholly enlightened', as being 'saved' while all the rest are 'doomed'.
19. A person who has acquired an indifference to his or her clothes, personal appearance, and physical cleanliness.
20. A person who sees in his indifference to the body signs of having transcended the flesh.
21. A person who is weak, malnourished and suffering from some chronic disease.
22. A person who sees in living with disease evidence of a total detachment from the problems of the physical world.

The above cover the basic propositions that comprise the basic personality traits commonly found among those that can be classified, hippie. However, as we have noted, not all those who can be so called have all these traits, but there do exist several of the propositions which are necessary, and in themselves sufficient, to categorize a certain type of person as a hippie. It is to these conditions that we turn before attempting a definition of the persons who might be termed as such.

PERSONALITY TRAITS NECESSARY AND SUFFICIENT FOR CLASSIFYING A PERSON AS A HIPPIE

These traits can themselves be forwarded as observable data; however, since these propositions are all to be found as the nucleus of the hippie personality, they will be put into a more positive form so as to indicate the definite presence of the same in the hippie.

Thus we might note that a hippie is a person who

1. Is presently using, and has been using, for more than three years at least, drugs synthetic and natural.
2. Has a drug-of-preference which he or she tends to use more frequently than any other(s).
3. Has sexual mores and norms overtly apart from the mainstream of society, as it envelops him or her.
4. Sees in sexual experimentation and diversification evidence of a superiority to the member-in-society.
5. Has not suffered economic deprivation, or has developed an apathy to it, and to all forms of work that bind one to a regular salary, promotions and similar bureaucratic procedures.

6. Is itinerant and feels that staying in one place more than three months leads to stagnation, spiritual, mental and physical.
7. Is obsessed with the concept of freedom and orders his or her life with it as a central focus of motivating action.
8. Has acquired an indifference to the body, which leads to chronic disease, torn clothes, and bodily dirt.
9. Who sees in religion a way of negating his or her own religion and transferring allegiance to another or insists on interpreting the world from an egocentric focus while simultaneously negating all other points of view.

These nine observations are both necessary as well as sufficient to categorize any person who possesses them in combination, a hippie. It is not being questioned here whether the hippie is or is not conscious and aware of what he is verbalizing, or is physically. However, these properties are essential to the hippie view of the world, whether the hippie comes from the East or West. Also we shall later take up the point of whether the hippie's view of the world is valid, invalid, or part valid and part invalid. That is a matter for later discussion, the present point being used to present an adequate description of the elements of the hippie world-view.

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ON DEFINING A HIPPIE

We have noted previously, various traits that would have to be present within a single human being before he or she could be categorized a hippie. However, very clearly, this is an academic approach to the field being studied. Hence, the definition that will be proposed is one that only someone studying a person through various sociological methodologies will be able to verify. This is so since amongst the propositions forwarded are those that are

1. Overt or Manifest, in that they can be verified at a glance, for instance the criteria of bodily dirt, lack of interest in clothes, often resulting in selling them and donning a torn kurta-pyjama.
2. Covert or Latent, in that they can only be verified by an in-depth study of the people concerned, so that who is and who is not a hippie can be easily confirmed or negated. Thus if a dirty, dishevelled, long-haired appearance leads one to suppose that a person is a hippie, this cannot be confirmed

unless the ethnographer has an opportunity to question the person about his life-style.

Given the above we might combine both aspects of the syndrome and define a hippie as a person who uses drugs of all kinds, but has a drug-of-preference which he uses more often and in choice over the others; has a sexual norm and practice based on a wider overt and covert code than the member-in-society; and finally has a view of the world in which the concept of freedom, of self-transcendence, and a reinterpretation of religion or its abandonment for another separate religion and culture, forms a fundamental tenet. That which runs as a thread through all this is the fact of economic sufficiency, and the habit of compulsive itinerance, which is held as indispensable to the hippie way of life-in-freedom.

The above definition distinguishes the true hippie from the common man in revolt for a brief period in college or after school in his or her adolescent years since, although they might be

1. using drugs and even having a drug-of-preference, they do not consider this more than a fling, certainly not a permanent way of being;
2. having sexual norms apart from the other members-in-society, this is not in any way part of a true world-view; rather it is another aspect of the fling which shall one day inevitably end in marriage, permanent jobs, promotions and so on, inducting them back into the common fold, so to speak;
3. talking about freedom and self-transcendence is one matter, a complete commitment to the same is another. Here again the dilettante is separated from the committed practitioner, since for one, talk about the same ends in what any hippie would consider 'slavery to the system', while for the true hippie it entails a great deal of hardship and toil in terms of the physical aspects of the same;
4. aping the hippie way of itinerance for a holiday, the adolescent might pick up his or her rucksack and wander from place to place, but he always has a permanent base on which to fall back; the true hippie has burnt his boats;
5. negating and reinterpreting religion is not possible for an adolescent in college for as will be indicated, the hippie world-view is not single or homogenous, but has often a remarkable degree of personal thought involved in it, based on the person's experiences in a framework very separate

from that of society at large, which he has rejected as false and hypocritical.

The above helps make clear that we are not considering would-be hippies, those who pretend they are in revolt for a holiday season, and who drop out from being dropouts as soon as the opportunity presents itself to them. We are considering the hard core of the initial vanguard who had a 'new' and 'radical' vision of the world and then had the courage to throw themselves whole-heartedly into it, and wend their way through all the difficulties it presented.

Rock and Roll Is a Weapon of Cultural Revolution

JOHN SINCLAIR

In their first American hit, in 1964, the Beatles had sung "I Want to Hold Your Hand." By 1970 The Jefferson Airplane chanted, "Got a Revolution, Got to Revolution!" In the years between, rock music became more than a form of popular culture. Individuals such as John Sinclair found in its very existence a central component of the cultural revolution. Sinclair, manager of the Detroit political rockers MC5, attempted to merge politics and music to a greater extent than most, as his 1968 article makes clear.

The duty of the revolutionary is to make the revolution." The duty of the musician is to make the music. But there is an equation that must not be missed: MUSIC IS REVOLUTION. Rock and roll music is one of the most vital revolutionary forces in the West—it blows people all the way back to their senses and makes them feel good, like they're *alive* again in the middle of this monstrous funeral parlor of western civilization. And that's what the revolution is all about—we have to establish a situation on this planet where all people can feel good all the time. And we will not stop until that situation exists.

Rock and roll music is a weapon of cultural revolution. There are not enough musicians around today who are hip to this fact. Too many of your every-day pop stars feel that music is simply a

raunchy harmonica and Ernest Tubb voice raunching and rheum-
ing in the old jack-legged chants—

Inside is a huge chaotic space with what looks at first in the
gloom like ten or fifteen American flags walking around. This
turns out to be a bunch of men and women, most of them in their
twenties, in white coveralls of the sort airport workers wear, only
with sections of American flags sewn all over, mostly the stars
against fields of blue but some with red stripes running down the
legs. Around the side is a lot of theater scaffolding with blankets
strewn across like curtains and whole rows of uprooted theater
seats piled up against the walls and big cubes of metal debris and
ropes and girders.

One of the blanket curtains edges back and a little figure
vaults down from a platform about nine feet up. It glows. It is a
guy about five feet tall with some sort of World War I aviator's hel-
met on. . . glowing with curves and swirls of green and orange. His
boots, too; he seems to be bouncing over on a pair of fluorescent
globes. He stops. He has a small, fine, ascetic face with a big mus-
tache and huge eyes. The eyes narrow and he breaks into a grin.

from *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*

HUNTER S. THOMPSON

"I don't like to write. I don't care what the fuck happens after I
write. Once I've gotten the story in my mind, the rest is pain."
Hunter S. Thompson's life and legend continue to make him one of
the most popular writers about the Counterculture with his inven-
tion of "gonzo" journalism—a hybrid of new journalism mixed
with sarcasm and colorful exaggeration, including wild hyperbole
about his "wild times" on alcohol and drugs. *Fear and Loathing in
Las Vegas* (1971), aptly subtitled *The Savage Journey to the Heart of
the American Dream*, exemplifies the gonzo style, particularly in the
excerpt here from Chapter 8, an elegy for the Counterculture.

Genius 'round the world stands hand in hand, and one shock of
recognition runs the whole circle 'round

—ART LINKLETTER

I live in a quiet place, where any sound at night means something is about to happen: You come awake fast—thinking, what does *that* mean?

Usually nothing. But sometimes . . . it's hard to adjust to a city gig where the night is full of sounds, all of them comfortably routine. Cars, horns, footsteps . . . no way to relax; so drown it all out with the fine white drone of a cross-eyed TV set. Jam the bugger between channels and doze off nicely. . . .

Ignore that nightmare in the bathroom. Just another ugly refugee from the Love Generation, some doom-struck gimp who couldn't handle the pressure. My attorney has never been able to accept the notion—often espoused by reformed drug abusers and especially popular among those on probation—that you can get a lot higher without drugs than with them.

And neither have I, for that matter. But I once lived down the hill from Dr. — on — Road,* a former acid guru who later claimed to have made that long jump from chemical frenzy to preternatural consciousness. One fine afternoon in the first rising curl of what would soon become the Great San Francisco Acid Wave I stopped by the Good Doctor's house with the idea of asking him (since he was even then a known drug authority) what sort of advice he might have for a neighbor with a healthy curiosity about LSD.

I parked on the road and lumbered up his gravel driveway, pausing enroute to wave pleasantly at his wife, who was working in the garden under the brim of a huge seeding hat . . . a good scene, I thought: The old man is inside brewing up one of his fantastic drug-stews, and here we see his woman out in the garden, pruning carrots, or whatever . . . humming while she works, some tune I failed to recognize.

Humming. Yes . . . but it would be nearly ten years before I would recognize that sound for what it was: Like Ginsberg far gone in the Om, — was trying to *humme me off*. That was no old lady out there in that garden; it was the good doctor *himself*—and his humming was a frantic attempt to block me out of his higher consciousness.

I made several attempts to make myself clear: Just a neighbor come to call and ask the doctor's advice about gobbling some LSD

* Names deleted at insistence of publisher's lawyer.

in my shack just down the hill from his house. I did, after all, have weapons. And I liked to shoot them—especially at night, when the great blue flame would leap out, along with all that noise . . . and, yes, the bullets, too. We couldn't ignore that. Big balls of lead/alloy flying around the valley at speeds up to 3700 feet per second. . . .

But I always fired into the nearest hill or, failing that, into blackness. I meant no harm; I just liked the explosions. And I was careful never to kill more than I could eat.

"Kill?" I realized I could never properly explain that word to this creature toiling here in its garden. Had it ever eaten meat? Could it conjugate the verb "hunt?" Did it understand hunger? Or grasp the awful fact that my income averaged around \$32 a week that year?

10 No . . . no hope of communication in this place. I recognized that—but not soon enough to keep the drug doctor from humming me all the way down his driveway and into my car and down the mountain road. Forget LSD, I thought. Look what it's done to *that* poor bastard.

So I stuck with hash and rum for another six months or so, until I moved into San Francisco and found myself one night in a place called "The Fillmore Auditorium." And that was that. One grey lump of sugar and BOOM. In my mind I was right back there in the doctor's garden. Not on the surface, but *underneath*—poking up through that finely cultivated earth like some kind of mutant mushroom. A victim of the Drug Explosion. A natural street freak, just eating whatever came by. I recall one night in the Matrix, when a road-person came in with a big pack on his back, shouting: "Anybody want some L . . . S . . . D . . . ? I got all the makin's right here. All I need is a place to cook."

The manager was on him at once, mumbling, "Cool it, cool it, come on back to the office." I never saw him after that night, but before he was taken away, the road-person distributed his samples. Huge white spansules. I went into the men's room to eat mine. But only *half* at first, I thought. Good thinking, but a hard thing to accomplish under the circumstances. I ate the first half, but spilled the rest on the sleeve of my red Pendleton shirt. . . . And then, wondering what to do with it, I saw one of the musicians come in. "What's the trouble," he said.

"Well," I said. "All this white stuff on my sleeve is LSD."

He said nothing: Merely grabbed my arm and began sucking on it. A very gross tableau. I wondered what would happen if

some Kingston Trio/young stockbroker type might wander in and catch us in the act. Fuck him, I thought. With a bit of luck, it'll ruin his life—forever thinking that just behind some narrow door in all his favorite bars, men in red Pendleton shirts are getting incredible kicks from things he'll never know. Would he dare to suck a sleeve? Probably not. Play it safe. Pretend you never saw it. . . .

Strange memories on this nervous night in Las Vegas. Five years later? Six? It seems like a lifetime, or at least a Main Era—the kind of peak that never comes again. San Francisco in the middle sixties was a very special time and place to be a part of. Maybe it *meant something*. Maybe not, in the long run . . . but no explanation, no mix of words or music or memories can touch that sense of knowing that you were there and alive in that corner of time and the world. Whatever it meant. . . .

History is hard to know, because of all the hired bullshit, but even without being sure of "history" it seems entirely reasonable to think that every now and then the energy of a whole generation comes to a head in a long fine flash, for reasons that nobody really understands at the time—and which never explain, in retrospect, what actually happened.

My central memory of that time seems to hang on one or five or maybe forty nights—or very early mornings—when I left the Fillmore half-crazy and, instead of going home, aimed the big 650 Lightning across the Bay Bridge at a hundred miles an hour wearing L. L. Bean shorts and a Butte sheepherder's jacket . . . booming through the Treasure Island tunnel at the lights of Oakland and Berkeley and Richmond, not quite sure which turn-off to take when I got to the other end (always stalling at the toll-gate, too twisted to find neutral while I fumbled for change) . . . but being absolutely certain that no matter which way I went I would come to a place where people were just as high and wild as I was: No doubt at all about that. . . .

There was madness in any direction, at any hour. If not across the Bay, then up the Golden Gate or down 101 to Los Altos or La Honda. . . . You could strike sparks anywhere. There was a fantastic universal sense that whatever we were doing was *right*, that we were winning. . . .

And that, I think, was the handle—that sense of inevitable victory over the forces of Old and Evil. Not in any mean or military sense; we didn't need that. Our energy would simply *prevail*.

There was no point in fighting—on our side or theirs. We had all the momentum; we were riding the crest of a high and beautiful wave. . . .

20 So now, less than five years later, you can go up on a steep hill in Las Vegas and look West, and with the right kind of eyes you can almost see the high-water mark—that place where the wave finally broke and rolled back.

from *Trips*

CHERYL PELLERIN

An independent science writer for broadcast and print, Cheryl Pellerin's work appears regularly on the Discovery Channel and The Learning Channel. Her articles have appeared in *Environmental Health Perspectives*, *Industrial Robot*, *The Baltimore Sun*, and *The Washington Post*. Her book *Trips* (1998) presents the latest findings about hallucinogens, underground artists, regulators who control psychedelics, federal scientists who approve and fund research, and scientists who have spent careers studying them. Neuroscience for a general audience, *Trips* presents recent advances in molecular biology and non-invasive brain-imaging, but also discusses the Counterculture and its encounters with LSD.

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LSD studies began mainly with psychotherapy patients, and, in the 1950s and early '60s, researchers used hallucinogens to produce changes of perception, thought and mood that many psychiatrists thought looked a lot like schizophrenia.

Two decades later, in 1962, Congress enacted laws that said researchers had to prove a new drug's safety (it wouldn't kill anyone) and efficacy (it did exactly what they said it'd do) for the condition it was marketed to treat, before it went on the pharmacy shelf. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said LSD wasn't even close, and officially made LSD an experimental drug. That meant anyone who wanted to work with LSD had to get FDA permission. By officially making LSD an experimental drug, FDA was saying it could only be used for research and never in general psychiatric practice. Now it was impossible for psychiatrists to get legal psychedelics to use in therapy. Some of the best re-