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Rockin' in Time

A Social History of Rock-and-Roll

Seventh Edition

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Folk Rock

“Ours is happy music—we haven’t any message to impart.”

—Sonny Bono

In early 1964, Gene Clark sat in a bar in Norfolk, Virginia, and looked at the selections on the jukebox. In August of the previous year, he had been recruited by the folk group, the New Christy Minstrels, and was touring with them. Unsuspectingly, he chose the song “She Loves You” by a new group from Liverpool called the Beatles. “I might have played it 40 times in the two days the New Christy Minstrels were playing that town,” he later enthused. “I knew, I *knew* that this was the future.” After hearing the Fab Four, Clark quit the New Christy Minstrels and moved to Los Angeles where he went to the Troubadour folk club and met

Roger McGuinn, another folkie who had been converted by the Beatles. Within months, the duo joined together with a few other former folk musicians and started a band that they called the Byrds, intentionally misspelled to emulate the spelling error of the Beatles’ own animal moniker. By 1965, the group topped the charts with a combination of Dylanesque folk, vocal harmonies and Beatles music to create a sound called folk rock.

By 1965, folk music changed fundamentally. Bands such as the Byrds took the introspective songs of an electrified Bob Dylan and combined them with the jangly sound of the British Invasion to create a new music. Following Dylan in his abandonment of the protest song for Beat-inspired, personal lyrics and influenced by the dizzying

success of the lads from Liverpool, these groups combined two of the dominant trends of the early 1960s for an escapist music that the nation embraced following the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Dylan’s Disenchantment

Folk music began to change during late 1963. On November 22, in Dallas, a rifleman shot and killed President John Kennedy, who was riding in a motorcade with his wife Jackie and Texas Governor John Connally and his wife. The assassination shocked and horrified the nation, which mourned a president who had symbolized energy, action, and optimism.

Folk musicians felt especially disillusioned by the assassination. Phil Ochs sensed “a definite flowering-out of positive feelings when John Kennedy became president. The civil rights movement was giving off positive vibrations. There was a great feeling of reform, that things could be changed, that the government cared, that an innovator could come in. . . . Things looked incredibly promising. Then came the Bay of Pigs, the beginnings of Vietnam and the assassination. It ruined the dream. November 22, 1963, was a mortal wound the country has not yet been able to recover from.”

Dylan experienced the same pain and confusion over Kennedy’s death. As folk singer Eric Andersen told it, “You can’t separate Dylan from history in the sense of what was going down, the way he reacted to a chain of events. The first being Kennedy’s death; I think that got him out of politics. . . . Kennedy, he was sort of like the shadow of the flight . . . and then that bird got shot out of the sky and everyone was exposed, naked to all the frightening elements, the truth of the country. It had flown, that force had lost out. And people were depressed.”

Dylan, though depressed over the Kennedy assassination, started to become more commercially successful. The national press began to notice Dylan during the early 1960s. In 1962, *Newsweek* tagged him “the newest rage” in folk music, and *Time* sarcastically mentioned that Bob Dylan delivered “his songs in a studied nasal that has just the right clothespin-on-the-nose honesty to appeal to those who most deeply care.” The next year, the influential folk magazine *Little Sandy Review* called him “our finest contemporary folk songwriter.”

Bob Dylan attracted national prominence after he signed with manager Albert Grossman, who was a major impetus in the folk revival. In 1957, Grossman opened one of the first folk clubs, the Gate of Horn, in Chicago; two years later, he collaborated with George Wein to launch the first Newport Folk Festival. In 1960, he met folk singer Peter Yarrow, whom he signed to a management contract. Grossman introduced Yarrow to onetime Broadway singer Mary Travers and stand-up comic Paul Stookey, who began to perform as Peter, Paul, and Mary. “It was Albert’s idea to make a group, and it was Albert’s suggestion that it contain a comedian, a very strong energetic woman’s voice—ballsy is I guess the term that you might use—and that I would be the serious presenter onstage and the sensitive male lead singer,” explained Yarrow. “Albert Grossman,” added Stookey, “had a vision of a more accessible form of folk entertainment.”



Left to right: Noel Paul Stookey, Mary Travers, and Peter Yarrow from the photo session for their debut album, 1962. Photo by Michael Ochs Archives. Getty Images, Inc.—Michael Ochs Archives.

The folk trio, propelled by Grossman's vision, hit the chart in April 1962 with "Lemon Tree" and six months later cracked the Top Ten with Pete Seeger's and Lee Hays's "If I Had a Hammer," which brought folk protest to a national audience. The group's debut album, which included both hits, topped the album chart in late October and would eventually sell two million copies. The next year, the trio reached number two on the singles chart with Dylan's "Blowin' in the Wind," which had been given to them by their manager, who had signed Dylan in June 1962. Along with an appearance at the 1963 Newport Folk Festival, which also featured Peter, Paul, and Mary, the success of the folk trio's version of the song lifted Dylan into the national spotlight.

After gaining national exposure, and in the wake of the Kennedy assassination, Dylan started to become somewhat disillusioned with political activism. "I agree with everything that's happening," he told writer Nat Hentoff over dinner in October 1964,

"but I'm not part of no Movement. If I was, I wouldn't be able to do anything else but be in 'the Movement.' I just can't sit around and have people make rules for me. . . . Those [protest] records I already made," said Dylan, referring to his first three albums, "I'll stand behind them, but some of that was jumping on the scene to be heard and a lot of it was because I didn't see anybody else doing that kind of thing. Now a lot of people are doing finger-pointing songs. You know—pointing at the things that are wrong. Me, I don't want to write for people anymore. You know—be a spokesman." Dylan began to criticize Joan Baez for her involvement with the Institute for the Study of Nonviolence at Carmel, California, established to "root out violence in ourselves and in the world." By 1965, Dylan abruptly informed a *Newsweek* reporter that "I've never written a political song. Songs can't save the world. I've gone through all that. When you don't like something, you gotta learn to just not need that something."

In place of social protest, Dylan crafted complex, personal, and sometimes cryptic songs. "I have to make a new song out of what I know and out of what I'm feeling," he told Nat Hentoff. "I once wrote about Emmett Till in the first person, pretending that I was him. From now on, I want to write what's inside me." *Another Side of Bob Dylan*, recorded on a single night in June 1964, featured such nonpolitical poetry as "Chimes of Freedom" and more pop-oriented tunes such as "All I Really Want to Do" and "It Ain't Me Babe." It explicitly repudiated the composer's folk protest in "My Back Pages." "I think it is very, very destructive music," complained Joan Baez at the time, regarding Dylan's new orientation. "I think he doesn't want to be responsible for anybody, including himself."

Dylan's next album, *Bringing It All Back Home*, released in early 1965, edged toward an electrified rock. On one side backed by the Chicago-based electric blues of the Paul Butterfield Blues Band, it highlighted bitter, dark songs such as "Subterranean Homesick Blues," "She Belongs to Me," and "Maggie's Farm." The other acoustic side included "Mr. Tambourine Man," "Gates of Eden," and "It's All Right, Ma (I'm Only Bleeding)." Also released in 1965, *Highway 61 Revisited* featured an all-out rock sound with the impressionistic, beat-inspired poetry of "Desolation Row," "Ballad of a Thin Man," and "Like a Rolling Stone."

On July 25, 1965, at the Newport Folk Festival, Dylan unveiled his new electric sound and brand of songwriting to the folk community. Behind the stage, some of the folk performers tried to prevent Dylan from playing his electric music with the Paul Butterfield Blues Band. "On one side you had Pete Seeger, [concert organizer] George Wein, the old guard," remembered Paul Rothchild, who mixed the Dylan set and had recently recorded the Butterfield band. "Pete is backstage, pacifist Pete, with an ax saying, 'I'm going to cut the fucking cables if that act goes onstage.'" Eventually, Seeger dashed to his "car and rolled up the windows, his hands over his ears." When Dylan unleashed the electrified "Maggie's Farm," recalled Elektra Records owner Jac Holzman, "suddenly we heard booing, like pockets of wartime flak." Irwin Silber, editor of the radical folk magazine *Sing Out!*, lamented "I wouldn't mind so much if he sang just one song about the war." Peter Yarrow later related, "People were just horrified. It was as if it was a capitulation to the enemy—as if all of a sudden you saw Martin Luther King, Jr. doing a cigarette ad."

Dylan, angry and shaken, stormed off the stage. Encouraged backstage by Johnny Cash and prodded from onstage by Peter Yarrow, he returned a few minutes later, alone. Dylan asked for a D harmonica from the crowd, which soon carpeted the stage with the instrument and hoped that the request signaled a victory for acoustic music. He sang "Mr. Tambourine Man" and "It's All Over Now, Baby Blue" and walked off the stage for the last time. "To me, that night at Newport was as clear as crystal," explained Paul Rothchild. "It's the end of one era and the beginning of another."

Though ridiculed by old-time folksters, Dylan secured a national audience with the electric sound. He snagged the number-two spot with "Like a Rolling Stone," his first hit single. He also first hit the Top Ten with *Bringing It All Back Home* and neared the top of the chart with *Highway 61 Revisited*. In 1966, the singer again cracked the Top Ten with *Blonde on Blonde*, which made the transition complete from folk protest to an electrified poetry inspired by the Beatniks, and raised the bar for anyone who hoped to write rock lyrics. Dylan had become a commercial success with a sound that would inspire a folk-rock boom.

Folk Rock

Many groups added vocal harmonies and the jangly sound of the early Beatles to Dylan's electrified folk sound and sometimes used his songs to create what critics termed *folk rock*. The Byrds, probably the premier folk rockers, were formed in 1964 by Roger McGuinn, who had backed the Limelites and the Chad Mitchell Trio. Besides McGuinn, the group consisted of bassist Chris Hillman, drummer Michael Clarke and guitarist Gene Clark, who had met the other member of the group, David Crosby, at the Troubadour Club in Los Angeles on a hootenanny night.

The Byrds combined their folk background, which had been rooted in Dylan, with the Beatles. "I did feel that the real folk scene was in the Village," remembered Roger McGuinn. "But the Beatles came out and changed the whole game for me. I saw a definite niche, a place where the two of them blended together. If you took Lennon and Dylan and mixed them together, that was something that hadn't been done." Though believing that "Dylan was real and the Beatles were plastic," McGuinn and his band grafted the bouncy, jangling harmonies of the mop-tops from Liverpool onto Dylanesque folk.

In 1965, after obtaining a test pressing of Dylan's "Mr. Tambourine Man" from Dylan's producer Tom Wilson, the Byrds meteorically rose to the top of the chart with a version of the song that featured bouncy vocal harmonies and a ringing twelve-string Rickenbacker guitar. Two months later, the group neared the top of the chart with the Dylan composition, "All I Really Want to Do." The group followed with electrified, harmony-rich versions of Dylan's "Spanish Harlem Incident," "The Times They Are A-Changin'," and "Chimes of Freedom," as well as chart-topper "Turn, Turn, Turn," a song adapted by Pete Seeger from the Book of Ecclesiastes. "I changed the chord structure to be more like, kind of Beatley, and we changed the beat," intimated Roger McGuinn about "Turn, Turn, Turn." "We put a kick, that Phil Spector beat, to it."



Simon and Garfunkel
in concert, c. 1965.
Permission by The Daily
of The University of
Washington.

Other groups became successful with the folk-rock formula of electrified renditions of Dylan songs sung in harmony with a Beatles beat. In 1965, the ebullient Turtles, a band that had switched from surf music to folk the year before, hit the Top Ten with "It Ain't Me Babe." The same year, a husband-wife team, Sonny and Cher, released the million-selling, Dylan-sounding "I Got You Babe." Cher, a former back-up singer for the Ronettes, scored a solo hit with Dylan's "All I Really Want to Do." "What do we sing? We call it folk and roll—a sort of folk music with a rocking beat. But with a smile," gushed Sonny Bono to *Melody Maker*. "Ours is happy music—we haven't any message to impart."

Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel were two high school friends, who in 1957 had attracted notice as Tom and Jerry with "Hey! Schoolgirl" and had appeared on *American Bandstand*. In 1964, after being influenced by the folk boom, they reemerged with a collegiate image and an album of soft harmonies, *Wednesday Morning, 3 A.M.* The album showcased Dylan's "The Times They Are A-Changin'" and Simon's composition, "The Sound of Silence," which in January 1966 became a number-one hit when Tom Wilson, Dylan's producer at the time, remixed the track by adding drums, percussion, and electric guitar.

Mimicking Dylan by wearing a denim cap and using a racked harmonica, Donovan Leitch of Scotland became the British answer to Dylan. In 1964, Donovan began performing folk music in clubs throughout the United Kingdom. The next year, he landed a spot on the British television show *Ready, Steady, Go!*, on which he appeared with a guitar that had the Woody Guthrie-inspired message: "This guitar kills." "I knew immediately that I would be to the European youth what Bob Dylan was to America, the European Bob Dylan," recalled Donovan. After appearing on the television show, Donovan hit the British singles chart with the acoustic "Catch the Wind," which bore an obvious resemblance to the Dylan title, "Blowin' in the Wind." Later in 1965, Donovan hit the chart with the antiwar "Universal Soldier," written by Native American Buffy Saint-Marie, and a four-song extended play record of the same name that included three more antiwar titles.

After appearing at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival and watching Dylan's rock-oriented performance, Donovan turned to folk rock. "What's wrong with electrified guitar? And drums?" he asked a reporter for *Melody Maker* in May 1965. In 1966, amid the folk-rock boom, Donovan scored his first American success with the chart-topping "Sunshine Superman," which featured cryptic lyrics and a rock band. In three months, Donovan snagged the number-two slot with the equally impressionistic "Mellow Yellow," which featured vocal assistance from Beatle Paul McCartney.

The Lovin' Spoonful joined the folk-rock legion. Formed in 1965 by John Sebastian who had backed several folk groups in Greenwich Village before forming the Spoonful, the group admitted its debt to Dylan. Sebastian insisted that Bob Dylan acted as "a force on our music, just like the 'Star Spangled Banner.' We all heard it." The group also attributed its music to the Beatles, delivering an upbeat electric sound similar to British invasion bands. They called their sound "good-time music." In October 1965, the Lovin' Spoonful hit the Top Ten with "Do You Believe in Magic." The next year, they followed with the Top Ten hits "You Didn't Have to Be So Nice" and "Daydream," and their blockbuster "Summer in the City."

By the mid-1960s, the escapist Dylan-Beatles amalgam of folk rock had permeated popular music. In September 1965 alone, reported *Billboard*, various folk rockers had recorded snappy versions of forty-eight different Dylan songs, most of them concerned with topics other than protest. According to *Newsweek*, "healthy, cheap, moral or venal, folk rock is what's happening at this moment in the dissonant echo chamber of pop culture."

In 1965, a few members of the folk band, Mother McCree's Uptown Jug Champions, heard the Lovin' Spoonful and became convinced that they needed to swap their acoustic guitars for electric instruments. These musicians bolted from Mother McCree's to form their own band called the Warlocks and eventually the Grateful Dead. However, unlike the Lovin' Spoonful that delivered a bubbly, radio-friendly sound, the Grateful Dead and their compatriots in San Francisco created a hard acid rock that would serve as the foundation for a psychedelic movement, which would confront established culture and call for a revolution.

Acid Rock

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“We have a private revolution going on.”

—A handbill distributed from the Blue Unicorn, a coffeehouse in the Haight

"Everybody's relaxing and not afraid to speak out and not afraid not to wear a tie to work," asserted Marty Balin, one of the founders of the Jefferson Airplane, a group that took off in San Francisco during the mid-1960s. "The one word I can think of is love, even though that sounds like a cliché, but that's where it's at, it's uninhibited, coming-out emotion. It's like the twenties. The twenties were really a start and at the end of it, they had all these great creative different things come out of it. . . . It's the most moving generation since the twenties. In creativity. And out of this are going to come many wonderful artists and people and thinkers."

Speak out, love, creativity, uninhibited, and happening now became the bywords of a new era. In the wake of the British invasion, thousands of middle-class, college-educated youths clustered around San Francisco Bay to demonstrate to the country, and eventually to the world, that love could replace war, sharing could replace greed, and community could supersede the individual. These San Francisco visionaries strove for nothing less than a total transformation of America that they demanded immediately. As Jim Morrison, lead singer of the Doors, screamed: "We want the world, and we want it *now*."



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A new hybrid of rock-and-roll reflected and helped propagate the new culture. Named after a strange new drug, LSD, acid rock broadcast the word of hippiedom from the epicenter, San Francisco, to the hinterlands. Unlike the working-class British invaders, who used music to entertain, the West Coast bands such as the Jefferson Airplane, the Grateful Dead, Quicksilver Messenger Service, and countless others (1,500 by one count) led a youth movement that consciously withdrew from America's nine-to-five, workaholic society and tried to create an alternative community built upon love. From 1965 to 1967, the vanguard of rock-and-roll had a mission.

The Beats

The social upheaval of hippiedom had its origins with the Beats, who had wandered from their homes in New York City to San Francisco's North Beach more than a decade earlier. In 1951, Jack Kerouac, the Columbia University football star turned writer, planted the seeds of the Beat Generation, when he bummed around the country with the ever-energetic, ever-adventuresome Neal Cassady and told of their travels in his book *On the Road*. That same year, poet Lawrence Ferlinghetti left New York for San Francisco because "it was the only place in the country where you could get decent wine cheap." Two years later, he opened the prime beatnik haunt in North Beach, City Lights Bookstore. Also in 1953, Allen Ginsberg migrated to San Francisco on the advice of his friend Neal Cassady. Two years later, he organized the first public appearance of the Beat Generation—a poetry reading advertised as "Six Poets at the Six Gallery," at which he premiered his controversial poem *Howl*, which the San Francisco Police Department first declared obscene, then banned and confiscated. In 1957, Kerouac finally published *On the Road* to the critical acclaim of *The New York Times*.

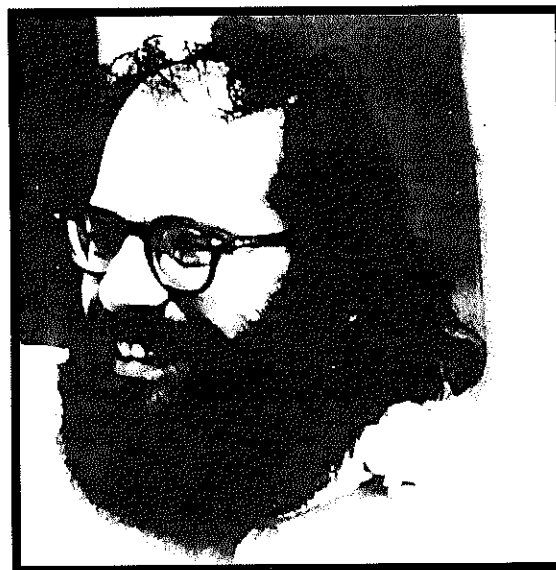
The Beats formulated a countercultural philosophy based on tenets of Eastern religion. Their metaphorical name—Beat—suggested the quest for beatitude that could be discovered in Zen Buddhism. It also referred to the patron saints of the movement, the drifters, who shed the trappings of institutional society and gathered in places such as New York City's Bowery. Although appearing "beat down" and downtrodden to "straights," the bums symbolized the freedom that the avant-garde so dearly cherished. As one writer put it, the beatniks "chased the unwashed American dream." Finally, the term alluded to the beat of jazz, especially the be-bop of artists such as Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie and the cool jazz of Miles Davis, Lennie Tristano, and Gerry Mulligan, who were considered cultural heroes by the Beat writers.

Congregating in San Francisco and New York City's Greenwich Village, these countercultural literati lambasted traditional American values. In his once-banned *Naked Lunch* (1959), William S. Burroughs, the literary genius who had inherited the Burroughs adding-machine fortune, wove together powerful, graphic images of a decaying society: "Smell of chili houses and dank overcoats and atrophied testicles. . . . A heaving sea of air hammers in the purple brown dusk tainted with rotten metal smell of sewer gas." Ginsberg penned antiestablishment poems such as *America* (1956), which blasted racism against African Americans and Native Americans and criticized

the army and the "sixteen-hour-a-day" work ethic. "America I've given you all and now I'm nothing," the poem begins. "I'm sick of your insane demands."

In place of traditional bourgeois values, the Beats sought fundamental change through cultural relativism. "We love everything," explained Kerouac. "Billy Graham, the Big Ten, rock-and-roll, Zen, apple pie, Eisenhower—we dig it all." Believing that no value was absolute, the Beats emphasized individual feelings. As one Beat argued, "I stay cool, far out, alone. When I flip it's over something *I* feel, only me." Ginsberg contended that the Beats wrote to encourage a "liberating insolence of recognizing one's own feelings and acting on one's own feelings rather than acting on Madison Avenue feelings of careerism. . . . I don't think you can create new structures until you have transformed consciousness," the poet explained. "The experiences through which you've gone, in conjunction with many others, is an indispensable state for reorganizing the system."

Such a radical ethos that was centered around the individual led to experimentation with sex and drugs, especially marijuana and amphetamines, which Kerouac mentioned in *Dharma Bums* and Ginsberg glorified in his poetry. "They had no interest in building a greater America, in fighting Communism, in working at a career to buy \$100 suits and dresses, color television sets, a house in the suburbs, or a flight to



Poet Allen Ginsberg, c. mid-'70s. A bridge between the Beats and the Hippies. *Permission by The Daily of The University of Washington.*

Paris," observed writer Burton Wolfe. "In fact, they laughed at those goals. Some brew, a few joints, a sympathetic partner in the sack, a walk in the park, an afternoon of lying in the sun on the beach, a hitchhike trip to Mexico—this was all there was."

The Beat challenge to institutional values resulted in attacks from more traditional quarters. Right-wing FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, turning literary critic in 1959, reviewed Lawrence Ferlinghetti's poem *Tentative Description of a Dinner Given to Promote the Impeachment of President Eisenhower*, concluding "it appears that Ferlinghetti may possibly be a mental case." One month later, the Alcoholic Beverages Commission declared North Beach a "problem area" and refused to issue any more liquor licenses there. Other, more violent critics bombed the women's restroom at the Co-Existence Bagel Shop, a favorite gathering spot for the San Francisco Beats, which, along with The Place, closed down shortly thereafter. By the end of 1959, Eric Nord, a visible West Coast Beat writer, told a courtroom that "the Beat Generation is dead. I don't go to North Beach anymore."

The Reemergence of the Beats: The New York Connection

Some of the Beats reappeared on the cultural scene to parent the psychedelic movement during the mid-1960s. On the East Coast, at St. Mark's Place in Greenwich Village in 1965, Beat poets Tuli Kupferberg, Ken Weaver, and Ed Sanders, the editor of *Fuck You: A Magazine of the Arts*, started the Fugs. "We used to read at the Metro, on Second Avenue," recalled Kupferberg. "After the readings, we'd go to the Dom, on St. Marks Place . . . where lots of young people would go. The jukebox had Beatles and Stones albums on it, and some of the kids would dance. Once they started, the other paper-assed intellectuals tried to get up and dance, too. And Ed Sanders got the idea it might be good to try to combine some of our poetry with rock music."

The band caricatured American society, in the process using the verse of William Blake in *How Sweet I Roamed from Field to Field* and the prose of William S. Burroughs in *Virgin Forest*. Allen Ginsberg described the countercultural message of the group in the liner notes on the Fugs' second album, released in 1966. "The United States is split down the middle," he contended. "On one side are everybody who make love with their eyes open, maybe smoke pot and maybe take LSD and look inside their heads to find the Self-God Walt Whitman prophesied for America. . . . Who's on the other side? People who think we are *bad*. . . . Yogies and Beatles say there is no other side. 'We can get along.' Can we? Teenagers rise up and understand. When they scream 'Kill for Peace' they're announcing publicly the madness of our white-haired crazy governments." The poet concluded: "The Bible says that when Christ comes back, 'every eye shall see.' Now every ear can hear, and when the Fugs break thru the monopoly blockade and their image is broadcast on National Television, every kid in America and most white-haired old suffering men will turn them on with Relief at last and every eye shall see."

To some extent, Ginsberg's prophecy came true. Although none of their albums were best sellers, the Fugs appeared on the cover of *Life* and *Look* magazines and snagged a spot on the David Susskind television show. The Fugs used their national

forum to propagate a philosophy, which fused the Beat sensibility with a hope for political change. Buoyed by "the tide of expectations created by the Kennedy era still in place," explained Ed Sanders, "[the band] believed that there might be some permanent change, that the country might become a social democracy. There'd be no homelessness, that there was an expectation the economy would be adjusted so everyone could partake in the largess of America."

The Velvet Underground, who performed many times with the Fugs, drew inspiration from the same Beat source. In 1964, at a party in New York City, songwriter Lou Reed met musical prodigy John Cale, who had been performing with an avant-garde ensemble, and they decided to form a band. "When I first met Lou, we were interested in the same things," recalled Cale. "We both needed a vehicle. Lou needed one to carry out his lyrical ideas and I needed one to carry out my musical ideas." They enlisted the help of guitarist Sterling Morrison and drummer Angus MacLise, who the following year was replaced by Maureen Tucker, and began playing at local clubs.

Pop art innovator Andy Warhol helped the band achieve notoriety. Rather than continue with his own rock group of fellow artists such as Jasper Johns, in July 1965 he agreed to manage the band after meeting Reed and Cale through mutual friends and added Hungarian chanteuse Nico to the lineup. Warhol named the band the Velvet Underground, after Michael Leigh's novel about sadism and masochism, showcased the band at his Factory club, and added them to his mixed-media extravaganza, the Exploding Plastic Inevitable. "He was the catalyst," remarked Reed about Warhol years later.

Reed, who wrote the lyrics for the band, derived his ideas from Beat sources. The songwriter, who had studied at Syracuse University with Beat poet Delmore Schwartz, crafted songs that dealt with the down-and-out themes of Beat fiction—heroin addiction in "I'm Waiting for the Man" and the rushing "Heroin," and cocaine in "Run, Run, Run." In a self-titled Velvet album, Reed led the listener through the adventures of a girl named Candy, who roamed the cultural underground assisted by her junkie boyfriend. The sexual and drug-related themes of the Velvet Underground, Reed later mentioned, were "only taboo on records. Let's keep that in mind. Movies, plays, books, it's all there. You read Ginsberg, you read Burroughs."

The Haight-Ashbury Scene

The Beats resurfaced in San Francisco to inspire the hippies, as the *San Francisco Examiner* writer Michael Fallon first called them in September 1965. At the first hippie gathering, held at Longshoremen's Hall near Fishermen's Wharf on October 16, 1965, wrote journalist Ralph Gleason, "long lines of dancers snaked through the crowd for hours holding hands. Free-form improvisation ('self-expression') was everywhere. The clothes were a blast. Like a giant costume party." Amid the revelry whirled a long-haired, bearded Allen Ginsberg.

Three weeks later, on November 6, Allen Ginsberg appeared at the Appeal, a benefit rock concert for the San Francisco Mime Troupe, an avant-garde theater group managed by Bill Graham. He brought his Beat friends, the Fugs, who flew in from New York for the event, mingling with hundreds of free-minded participants who

lived in the surrounding Haight-Ashbury district near San Francisco State College. At the end of the evening, Ginsberg chanted as the Hashbury hippies cleaned the Mime Troupe loft.

For three days in late January 1966, Beat writer Ken Kesey, author of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1962), and his band of free spirits, known as the Merry Pranksters, hosted the Trips Festival, which attracted more than 6,600 people. For the event they enlisted the services of the Grateful Dead and Big Brother and the Holding Company, set up five movie screens, on which they projected a mind-boggling combination of colors and shapes, and spiked the punch with some LSD, a concoction that became known as the Kool-Aid acid test. At the festivities, Kesey stalked the floor dressed in a space helmet and a jumpsuit and periodically composed free-form poetry on an overhead projector. Eyewitness Ralph Gleason saw one man "bandaged all over, with only his eyes peeking out through dark glasses, carrying a crutch and wearing a sign: 'You're in the Pepsi generation and I'm a pimply freak.' Another long-haired exotic dressed in a modified Hell's Angels' leather jerkin that had 'Under Ass Wizard Mojo Indian Fighter' stenciled on his back. Several varieties of Lawrence of Arabia costumes wandered through."

At one point, Neal Cassady, the Beat High Priest who had appeared in Kerouac's *On the Road* as Dean Moriarty and had inspired the Indian in Kesey's *Cuckoo's Nest*, "stood for a while upstairs and then swung out and over the back of the balcony railing, scaring everyone who saw him, as they expected him to slip and fall to the floor." Cassady would reappear at countless Grateful Dead concerts to deliver amazing free-associational monologues as preludes to the performances. He also sat at the helm of the psychedelic bus, which took Kesey and the Merry Pranksters on a symbolic trip across the country. Neal Cassady especially influenced the Grateful Dead, the premier psychedelic band. "There's no experience in my life yet that equals riding with Cassady in like a 1956 Plymouth or a Cadillac through San Francisco or from San Jose to Santa Rosa," remembered Jerry Garcia, lead guitarist for the Dead. "He was the ultimate *something*—the ultimate person as art."

Other Beats helped organize the "First Human Be-In," which took place in Golden Gate Park Stadium on January 14, 1967. Allen Ginsberg, painter Michael Bowen, playwright Michael McClure, and poets Lenore Kandal and Gary Snyder helped stage the multicolored community gathering, which attracted 20,000 people on an unseasonably warm day. Early in the morning, Ginsberg and Snyder opened the proceedings by conducting an ancient Hindu blessing ritual, the dakshina, around the Polo Field to ensure its suitability for the coming pilgrimage. Throughout the day, hippies danced on the grass to the sounds of the Grateful Dead, the Jefferson Airplane, and Quicksilver Messenger Service. "The costumes were a designer's dream, a wild polyglot mixture of Mod, Paladin, Ringling Brothers, Cochise and Hell's Angels' Formal," wrote Ralph Gleason in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. "The poets read. Allen Ginsberg (who may yet be elected president) chanted and Gary Snyder sat on the stage and joined in. Bells rang and balloons floated in the air. A man went around handing out oranges and there were sandwiches and candy and cookies. No one was selling anything." The celebration ended when Gary Snyder blew on a conch shell, the ritual instrument of the

Yamabushi sect of Japanese Buddhism, and Allen Ginsberg led a chant of "Om Shri Maitreya" to the Coming Buddha of Love.

When news of these remarkable events spread to the burgeoning ranks of college-age baby boomers, the psychedelic ranks in San Francisco began to swell. "Like, wow! There was an explosion," remarked Jay Thelin, co-owner with his brother Ron of the Psychedelic Shop, which served as the briefing center for hippie initiates to the city. "People began coming in from all over and our little information shop became sort of a clubhouse for dropouts and, well, we just let it happen, that's all." By 1967, fifty thousand hippies resided in or near the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco.

The Hippie Culture

Many who flocked to the Haight were baby boomers, who had grown up in educated, middle-class homes. Most of the hippies, who lived in San Francisco at the time, wrote journalist Hunter Thompson, "were white and voluntarily poor. Their backgrounds were largely middle class; many had gone to college." According to a report by San Francisco State sociologist H. Taylor Buckner, 96 percent of the Haight hippies were between the ages of sixteen and thirty, 68 percent had attended college for a time, and 44 percent had a father who had earned a college degree.

The hippies, as with the Beats, criticized the bourgeois values with which they had been raised. "The standard thing is to feel in the gut that middle-class values are all wrong," remarked one hippie. "It's the system itself that is corrupt," added another. "Capitalism, communism, whatever it is. These are phony labels. There is no capitalism or communism. Only dictators telling people what to do." The hippies, remarked Peter Cohan of the Haight, "are the fruit of the middle class and they are telling the middle class they don't like what has been given them."

The hippies, raised in an age of relative affluence, attacked the materialistic American culture that had been formed and embraced by their Depression-bred parents. "I have no possessions," remarked Joyce Ann Francisco of the *San Francisco Oracle*, the preeminent psychedelic newspaper, which was published by Ron Thelin in the Haight. "Money is beautiful only when it is flowing. When it piles up it's a hang-up." The residents of the Haight, noticed historian Arnold Toynbee when he toured the district during the spring of 1967, "repudiate the affluent way of life in which making money is the object of life and work. They reject their parents' way of life as uncompromisingly as Saint Francis rejected the rich cloth merchants' way of life of his father in Assisi."

Many hippies challenged other dominant values. Morning Glory, a long-haired, twenty-two-year-old hippie, felt that the "human body is a beautiful thing. It should be displayed. I want people to see what I look like, and I want to see what they look like without a bunch of clothes covering them up. Nude, everybody is in the same bag, the same economic class."

Such a freewheeling attitude toward nudity, coupled with the use of the birth control pill by more than six million women in 1966 a decade after its introduction to the general public, led to a rejection of sexual taboos. As early as 1965, Haight residents started the Sexual Freedom League to confront traditional standards concerning sex. Within two years, hundreds of youths engaged in premarital sex with many

partners, continuing a trend that had intensified with the Beats. "The '60s will be called the decade of the orgasmic preoccupation," predicted Dr. William Masters, the director of the Institute for Sex Research at Indiana University. "Young people are far more tolerant and permissive regarding sex."

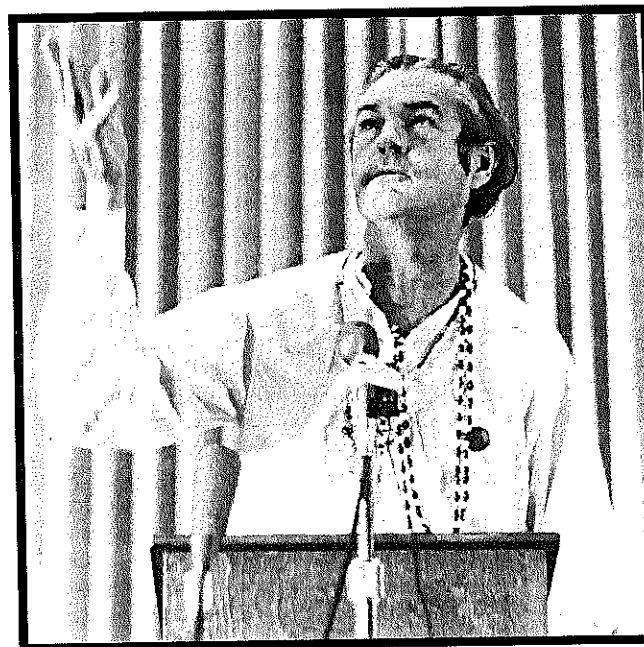
To distinguish themselves from, and many times to antagonize, the middle-class American mainstream, male hippies generally wore their hair long. "As for bad vibrations emanating from my follicles, I say great," wrote James Simon Kunen in the *Strawberry Statement*. "I want the cops to sneer and the old ladies to swear and the businessmen to worry."

By challenging authority, the hippies hoped to create an atmosphere that engendered freedom of individual expression. "We have a private revolution going on," read a handbill distributed by the Blue Unicorn, a coffeehouse in the Haight. "A revolution of individuality and diversity that can only be private."

The hippies turned to mind-expanding drugs to enhance their individual potentials. Most rolled marijuana or the more expensive hashish into joints or smoked the weed Indian style in pipes. In 1965, Haight residents organized the legalize marijuana movement (LEMER), which held meetings at the Blue Unicorn. By the end of the decade, more than 96 percent of the hippies in the Haight had smoked marijuana, and more than ten million youths across the nation had tried the drug.

Another drug, the hallucinogen LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide), defined the hippie experience. Discovered in Switzerland in April 1943 and legal in the United States until late 1966, "acid" fragmented everyday perception into a multitude of melting shapes and vibrant colors. "The first thing you notice is an incredible enhancement of sensory awareness," related Timothy Leary, the ex-Harvard professor who edited the *Psychodelic Review*, organized the LSD-based League for Spiritual Discovery, and became the most visible popularizer and high priest of acid. "Take the sense of sight. LSD vision is to normal vision as normal vision is to the picture of a badly tuned television set. Under LSD, it's as though you have microscopes up to your eyes, in which you see jewel-like, radiant details of anything your eye falls upon. . . . The organ of the corti in your inner ear becomes a trembling membrane seething with tattoos of sound waves. The vibrations seem to penetrate deep inside you, swell and burst there. . . . You not only hear but *see* the music emerging from the speaker system like dancing particles, like squirming curls of toothpaste."

Timothy Leary contended that the drug experience resulted in altered, introspective states that expanded individual consciousness. In September 1966, comfortably lying on a mattress in his headquarters, a sixty-four-room mansion in Millbrook, New York, he outlined the various states of consciousness to *Playboy*: "The lowest level of consciousness is sleep—or stupor, which is produced by narcotics, barbiturates and our national stuporific, alcohol. The second level of consciousness is the conventional wakeful state, in which awareness is hooked to conventional symbols: flags, dollar signs, job titles, brand names, party affiliations and the like. . . . In order to reach [the third level], you have to have something that will turn *off* the symbols and open up your billions of sensory cameras to the billions of impulses that are hitting them. The chemical that opens the door to this level has been well known for centuries. . . . It is marijuana. . . . But we must bid a sad farewell to the sensory level of



Timothy Leary, c. mid-'70s, the guru of LSD. Permission by The Daily of The University of Washington.

consciousness and go on to the fourth level, which I call the cellular level. It is well known that the stronger psychedelics such as mescaline and LSD take you *beyond* the senses into a world of cellular awareness. During an LSD session, enormous clusters of cells are turned on, and consciousness whirls into eerie panoramas for which we have no words or concepts." Leary advised readers to "turn on, tune in, and drop out."

Many heeded Leary's advice. "Grass and LSD are the most important factors in the community," remarked Jay Thelin. "You should acquaint yourself with all of the consciousness-expanding drugs. I turn on every Sunday with acid, and I smoke grass every day, working continuously with an expanding consciousness." Gabe Katz of the *San Francisco Oracle* agreed, "The only way to understand is to turn on. The chemicals are essential. Without them you can ask a million questions and write a million words and never get it." On October 6, 1966, when legislation outlawing LSD took effect, hundreds of residents in the Haight staged a "Love Pageant" to assert the "inalienable rights" of "freedom of the body, the pursuit of joy, and the expansion of consciousness." In 1966, an official from the Food and Drug

Administration estimated that more than 10 percent of all college students had ingested LSD and more than 90 percent of youths in the Haight had taken the drug. Many of the hippies had obtained LSD from chemist Augustus Owsley Stanley III, the grandson of a Kentucky senator, who had produced and distributed an estimated fifteen million acid tabs. He sometimes dispensed them free at events such as the Trips Festival.

With their newfound consciousness, the hippies embraced the beliefs of past, less technology-driven civilizations, real or imagined, to create a counterculture. Some followed the example of the Beats by looking for salvation in the mysteries of the Orient. One San Francisco free spirit expounded that "society feeds us machines, technology, computers and we answer with primitivism: the *I Ching*, the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, Buddhism, Taoism. The greatest truths lie in the ancient cultures. Modern civilization is out of balance with nature." Many hippies adopted the teachings of Zen popularizer Alan Watts. Others joined Hare Krishna, when in January 1967 the International Society for Krishna Consciousness moved to the Haight, and Allen Ginsberg declared that a Hare Krishna mantra "brings a state of ecstasy."

Attempting to recapture a lost innocence, some embraced the popular image of the noble American Indian. They slipped into moccasins and sported fringed deerskin jackets, headbands, feathers, and colorful beads. Many hippies painted their faces and bodies for festive occasions as did Native Americans during a ceremony. In September 1965, the Committee Theater in the Haight staged a multimedia extravaganza, "America Needs Indians," and a few months later took their show to the acid tests. In January 1967, organizers of the Human Be-In in Golden Gate Park called the event a "Pow Wow" and a "Gathering of Tribes," advertising it with a poster that pictured a Plains Indian on horseback clutching a blanket in one hand and an electric guitar in the other.

Even though most Native Americans such as Robert Costo, president of the American Indian Historical Society, believed that the hippies practiced a "certain insidious exploitation of the Indian which is the worst of all," residents of the Haight created a cult of tribalism. "For one of the yearly Tribal Stomp dances at the Avalon, we gave everyone a little leather thong with a little Indian bell and a long white turkey feather tied to it," recalled Chet Helms, manager of the dance hall. "I can't tell you how effective that thematic favor was. It made everyone a member of the tribe."

Adhering to the notion of tribalism, some banded together in communal living arrangements. At Drop City near Trinidad, Colorado, twenty-two midwestern hippies built and lived in geodesic domes constructed from automobile hoods. Roughly 40 miles from San Francisco near Sebastopol, more than fifty hippies communally farmed the 31-acre Morningstar Ranch. Morningstar founder Lou Gottlieb, who had played in the folk group the Limelites, envisioned the Ranch as "an alternative for those who can't make it in the straight society and don't want to. . . for people who are technologically unemployable and for other people it would be a retreat where they could come and recreate, I mean really re-create themselves. I can see ten Morningstars in every state, where people from straight society would come to live for a while in the 'alternative society,' a whole different culture based on noncompetition." In the Haight itself, reported a San Francisco State sociologist, more than 25 percent of the hippies lived with ten or more people.

Some hippies, believing in a noncompetitive, tribalistic society, shared their resources with others. The Diggers, most of them former members of the San Francisco Mime Troupe, who named themselves after a seventeenth-century society of English agricultural altruists, provided free food, shelter, and transportation to needy hippies in the Haight-Ashbury district. A Digger leaflet distributed at the October 1966 "Love Pageant" advertised "free food, every day, free food, it's free because it's yours." The Prunes in Cleveland, the Brothers in Seattle, and the Berkeley Provos shared the Digger spirit.

Even the shopkeepers in the Haight exhibited a community spirit. On November 23, 1966, the *San Francisco Examiner* told its readers that "the hip purveyors of painting, poetry, handcrafted leather and jewelry along Haight Street, having been blackballed by the Haight Merchants' Association, have formed their own Haight Street Merchants' Association, HIP for short." Once organized, HIP established a job cooperative to cope with the incoming hippies and provided free legal advice. Psychedelic Shop owners Jay and Ron Thelin additionally devoted over one-third of their shop's floor space to a "calm center," where hippies could meditate, talk, or sleep.

The hippies cultivated personal appearances that reflected the elements of their counterculture. In 1966, Janis Joplin, the lead singer for Big Brother and the Holding Company, described Haight fashion in a letter to her family: "The girls are, of course, young and beautiful looking with long straight hair. The beatnik look, I call it, is definitely in. Pants, sandals, capes of all kinds, far-out handmade jewelry, or loose-fitting dresses and sandals. . . . The boys are the real peacocks," observed the singer about the colorful, acid-inspired male attire. "All hair at least Beatle length. And very ultramod dress—boots, *always* boots, tight low pants in hounds tooth check, stripes, even polka dots! Very fancy shirts—prints, very loud, high collars, Tom Jones full sleeves. Fancy print ties, Bob Dylan caps. Really too much." Added Joplin, "the younger girls wear very tight bell-bottoms cut very low around the hips and short tops—bare midriffs," which reflected the ongoing sexual revolution and contributed to the doubling of the sales of Levi Strauss jeans from 1963 to 1966. The hippies had created a fashion that exemplified a counterculture influenced by the Beats, accessed by LSD, and based upon a loose-knit community of individuals that focused on self-expression.

By the mid-1960s, hundreds of newspapers were established to promulgate the countercultural ethos. In 1964, Art Kunkin started the *Los Angeles Free Press*, an underground newspaper, modeled after the *Village Voice* in New York. In late 1966, the *San Francisco Oracle* published the first of thirteen issues, unveiling a non-news, art-oriented format and a psychedelic look of vibrant, random colors and swirling typefaces perfected by hip artist Rick Griffin. Remembered *Oracle* editor Allen Cohen: "We were going to fill our newspaper with art, philosophy, poetry and attend to this change of consciousness that was happening in the Haight-Ashbury and, we hoped, the world." The *Oracle* staff wanted to "serve as vehicles for the forces that were emerging." By 1967, when the Underground Press Syndicate (UPS) was founded, five other major underground tabloids printed stories about sex, drugs, and revolution: *The East Village Other*, *The Paper* in East Lansing, Michigan, the *Berkeley Barb*, the *Seed* in Chicago, and the *Fifth Estate* in Detroit. Two years later, more than

Acid Rock: The Trip Begins

"Rock-and-roll," announced *Rolling Stone*, which had been established in 1967 by Berkeley dropout and budding journalist Jann Wenner and well-known music critic Ralph Gleason, "is more than just music. It is the energy center of the new culture and the youth revolution." Ray Manzarek of the Doors echoed, "That was the point of rock-'n'-roll at the time, to become a new tribe, to bring America into a cleaner, purer realm of existence." In January 1966, handbills distributed to promote the Trips Festival hinted that "maybe this is the ROCK REVOLUTION."

The Grateful Dead, another major exponent of acid rock, grew from folk roots. "When the whole folk music thing started, I got caught up into that," remembered Jerry Garcia. "When Joan Baez's first record came out I heard it and I heard her finger picking the guitar, I'd never heard anything like it before so I got into that and I started getting into country music, into old-time white music. Mostly white spiritual stuff, white instrumental music and I got into finger style, the folk-music-festival scene, the whole thing. And I was very heavy into that for a long time and I sort of employed a scholarly approach and even went through the South with tape recorders and stuff recording bluegrass bands. I spent about three years playing bluegrass banjo, that was my big thing and I almost forgot how to play the guitar. . . . And then . . . we got a jug band going and I took up the guitar again and from the jug band it was right into rock-and-roll. . . . I was sort of a beatnik guitar player." Garcia continued: "Bob Weir, who plays rhythm, did the whole folk-blues coffeehouse thing. That was his thing. And he also played jug and kazoo in the jug band [Mother McCree's Uptown Jug Champions] when we were playing. And he's a student, you might say. His musical leader was Jorma [Kaukonen]." Garcia concluded: "Here on the West Coast, the guys that are into rock-'n'-roll music have mostly come up like I have . . . up through folk music."



Poster for a Jefferson Airplane show at the Fillmore, San Francisco.
(Artist: Clifford Charles Seeley.) Photo by Neal, Stratford, & Kerr.
Wolfgang's Vault. Bill Graham Presents Poster BG69. © B.G.P. 1967.

In early 1965, folkies Garcia and Weir joined with blues enthusiast Ron "Pig Pen" McKernan, drummer Bill Kreutzmann, and bassist Phil Lesh to form the band the Warlocks, which was renamed the Grateful Dead later that year.

Other acid rockers rose through the ranks of folk. Peter Albin, an impetus behind Big Brother and the Holding Company, had organized folk concerts during the early 1960s and had been a member of a folk group playing "Kingston Trio-type music." James Gurley, another member of Big Brother, began "working in a progressive bluegrass band." David Freiberg, the unofficial leader of Quicksilver Messenger Service, learned guitar in 1963 amidst the folk craze, and one-time fellow band member, drummer Dino Valenti, had worked for several years as a folk singer in Greenwich Village. In 1964, Country Joe McDonald "came to become a folk singer with the beatniks in San Francisco" and formed a jug band with Barry Melton, a friend of Peter Albin, shortly before he teamed up with the Fish to deliver his politically minded brand of psychedelic rock. Likewise, lead guitarist Robby Kreiger of the Doors—which formed in late 1965 with Kreiger, John Densmore on drums, singer Jim Morrison, and organist Ray Manzarek—had started a jug band during his stay at the University of California at Santa Barbara.

Psychedelic music, though based in folk, featured a loud, experimental sound. Unlike the acoustic strummings of early Bob Dylan, the acid rockers amplified their message to glass-shattering levels. Jerry Garcia thought of it as "a sensory overload." The San Francisco bands also favored extended guitar improvisations, sometimes distorted by guitar effects, which combined folk music with some blues riffs, a dash of country-western, and traces of Indian ragas.

Such eclectic experimentation fully utilized the long-play (LP) format of the 12-inch, 33 1/3-rpm record. Introduced by Columbia in 1948, the LP had been used in the pop field to market collections of three- to four-minute songs. During the psychedelic era, rock artists began to improvise on songs that sometimes lasted an entire side, using the LP medium as classical and jazz musicians had done years earlier. Paralleling the rise of the avant-garde in jazz during the mid-1960s, the psychedelic sound exemplified the freewheeling, experimental bent of the counterculture.

Rock-and-Roll Revolution

The new sound of experimentation came from middle-class youths. Grace Slick, the daughter of a Chicago investment banker, attended the exclusive Finch College where, in her words, she became a "regular suburban preppy." Fellow Airplane member Jorma Kaukonen was the son of a foreign service official and graduated from the University of California at Santa Clara; Airplane drummer Spencer Dryden had moved to Hollywood with his father, an assistant film director. Jim Morrison, the son of a rear admiral, had enrolled in the Theater Arts Department at UCLA, where he met keyboardist Ray Manzarek. John Cipollina, the guitarist for Quicksilver Messenger Service, had become interested in music through his mother, a concert pianist, and his godfather, Jose Iturbi, a well-known classical pianist. Peter Albin of Big Brother and the Holding Company grew up in suburban San Francisco, the son of a magazine editor-illustrator.

These middle-class youths wanted to overturn the social order in which they had been raised. Jim Morrison, characterized as "a postbeat poet influenced by Kerouac and Ginsberg" by fellow Door Ray Manzarek, professed an interest "in anything about revolt, disorder, chaos. It seemed to me to be the road toward freedom—external revolt is a way to bring about internal freedom." He told *The New York Times*, "When I sing my songs in public, that's a dramatic act, but not just acting as in theater, but a *social* act, real action." As he sang in one song, he hoped to "break on through to the other side." Grace Slick of the Jefferson Airplane hoped for "a whole turnaround of values." Chet Helms, the transplanted Texan who opened the Avalon Ballroom in the Haight and who became the manager of Big Brother and the Holding Company, "was very interested in the scene's potential for revolution. For turning things upside down, for changing values."

As with the hippies in general, the psychedelic rockers challenged restrictive, middle-class values, especially those dealing with sex. The Fugs, always forthright, belted out "Boobs Alot," "Group Grope," and "Dirty Old Man." Their name itself raised the eyebrows of the sexually inhibited. Reveling in the same theme, the Doors hit the chart with "Love Me Two Times," "Hello, I Love You," "Love Her Madly," and their biggest hit, "Light My Fire." Morrison, who referred to himself as an "erotic politician," faced legal charges when he supposedly exposed himself on stage in Florida. The outspoken Grace Slick, who delivered such songs as "Somebody to Love," confessed that "it doesn't matter what the lyrics say, or who sings them. They're all the same. They say, 'Be free—free in love, free in sex.'" Marty Balin of the Airplane added, "The stage is our bed and the audience is our broad. We're not entertaining, we're making love."

Many psychedelic bands renounced the competitive, corporate structure of American society in general and of the recording industry in particular. Jerry Garcia of the Grateful Dead resented "being just another face in a corporate personality. There isn't even a Warner 'brother' to talk to. The music business and the Grateful Dead are in two different orbits, two different universes." Stephen Stills of Buffalo Springfield, and later of Crosby, Stills, and Nash, added, "The Dead were the first people, I don't know whether it was acid or what, to come to that realization where they really didn't give a shit whether they made it or not." Paul Kantner of the Jefferson Airplane complained, "The record companies sell rock-and-roll records like they sell refrigerators. They don't care about the people who make rock or what they're all about as human beings." Max Weiss, owner of Fantasy Records in the Bay area, characterized the San Francisco bands as "absolutely noncommercial."

Opposed to a faceless commercialism, bands such as the Grateful Dead and the Airplane began to stage free concerts. "We don't do what the system says—make single hits, take big gigs, do the success number," Dead manager Rock Scully told an interviewer. "The summer of 1967, when all the other groups were making it, we were playing free in the park, man, trying to cool the Haight-Ashbury." Guitarist Eric Clapton recalled about his first visit to San Francisco, "The first thing that really hit me hard was the Grateful Dead were playing a lot of gigs for nothing. There is this incredible thing that the musical people seem to have toward their audience: they want to give."

The emphasis on sharing shaped the group concept of the psychedelic band. David Getz, drummer for Big Brother and the Holding Company, said that these

bands tried “to consciously avoid making anyone the star, focusing more on the interaction between the audience and the band, and trying to create something together.” Acid master Owsley Stanley agreed, “All the bands were tribal and tribal meant you agreed amongst yourselves as to who was momentarily the leader of the team.”

Most San Francisco bands felt camaraderie with one another. “All of the bands were very close,” remembered Mickey Hart of the Grateful Dead. “We’d be over at each other’s houses, see each other all-day long, party at night. There were no hassles about who was going to open the show or close the show. It seemed like when we played with one of our sister bands, our compadres, we always played a little better for each other.”

The cooperative feeling within bands sometimes extended to their own living arrangements. The members of the Grateful Dead lived communally in the Haight district at 710 Ashbury Street. Quicksilver Messenger Service roomed together in a house near the Dead headquarters. For a time, the Jefferson Airplane lived together in the Haight at 2400 Fulton Street, and the members of Big Brother and the Holding Company roomed communally in a Victorian house at 1090 Page Street.

Many acid rockers discovered the cooperative alternative to a competitive society through LSD. “Along came LSD and that was the end of that whole world. The whole world just went kablooeey,” related Jerry Garcia. “It changed everything, you know, it was just—ah, first of all, for me personally, it freed me . . . because I suddenly realized that my little attempt at having a straight life and doing that was really a fiction and just wasn’t going to work out.”

As well as demonstrating the hollowness of self-centered mainstream values, acid helped Garcia realize the existence of more interconnected social relationships. “To get really high is to forget yourself,” he asserted. “And to forget yourself is to see everything else. And to see everything else is to become an understanding molecule in evolution, a conscious tool in the universe.”

As the avenue to understanding a new social order, mind-expanding drugs became the centerpiece of acid rock. They inspired the names of many West Coast bands: the Loading Zone, Morning Glory, the Weeds, the Seeds, and the Doors, the last name taken from a phrase of poet William Blake, which had been quoted by Aldous Huxley in a book about a mescaline experience, *The Doors of Perception*.

Many San Francisco bands extolled psychedelic drugs in their songs. The Jefferson Airplane delivered the Haight-Ashbury anthem, “White Rabbit.”¹ “One pill makes you larger and one pill makes you small, and the ones that mother gives you don’t do anything at all. Go ask Alice when she’s ten feet tall,” sang Grace Slick while the Airplane churned out a sinister, electric drone in the background. She continued: “When the men on the chessboard get up and tell you where to go. You just had some kind of mushroom and your mind is moving low. Go ask Alice, I think she’ll know.” Then Slick launched into her piercing vibrato: “When logic and proportion have fallen softly dead, and the white knight’s talking backwards and the red queen’s lost her head, remember what the dormouse said, FEED YOUR HEAD, FEED YOUR HEAD.” By 1969, a distraught Art Linkletter, whose daughter had overdosed on LSD, charged that at least half of all rock songs were “concerned with secret messages to teenagers to drop

¹Lyrics from “White Rabbit.” Lyrics and music by Grace Slick, copyright © 1967 Irving Music, Inc. (BMI). All rights reserved—International Copyright Secured.

out, turn on, and groove with chemicals.” A year later, Vice President Spiro Agnew complained that much of “rock music glorified drug use.”

Drugs defined the purpose of some psychedelic bands. According to Jerry Garcia, “The Grateful Dead is not for cranking out rock-and-roll, it’s not for going out and doing concerts or any of that stuff, I think it’s to get high.”

Light shows at dances in the Haight simulated the LSD experience. The projection of light through liquid pigments in motion to create ever-changing expressionistic light shows had been discovered in 1952 by San Francisco State professor Seymour Locks as he prepared for a national conference of art educators. Through the efforts of beatnik art student Elias Romero, who witnessed some of Locks’s first shows, hipsters such as Bill Ham, Anthony Martin, and Ben Van Meter learned the craft and adapted it to the hippie subculture. By 1966 dances in the Haight, normally held in the Avalon Ballroom, the Straight Theater, or the Fillmore Theater, featured light shows of melting colors, which mimicked an LSD experience.

The poster art advertising the gatherings captured on paper the acid-inspired, swirling designs of the light shows. Through recycling motifs and the lettering of Art Nouveau artists such as Alphonse Mucha, the posters featured a unique graphic style of thick, distorted letters that melted together against vibrant, multicolored, pulsating backgrounds, which could only be easily deciphered by members of the hippie tribe. They were crafted by Haight artists such as Wes Wilson, Stanley Mouse (a.k.a. Miller), Alton Kelley, Victor Moscoso, Bonnie MacLean, Lee Conklin, and Rick Griffin, who also designed album covers for the Grateful Dead and Big Brother and the Holding Company. “When I started doing posters,” explained Wes Wilson, “I think I selected my colors from my visual experiences with LSD.” Poster artist Lee Conklin echoed, “I made it my mission to translate my psychedelic experience onto paper.” The resulting graphic art, contended Chet Helms, signaled that “the joyless head-long rat-race to the top was supplanted by the joyful, sensuous curves and gyrations of the dance, expanding in all directions.”

Bill Graham, a politically minded, thirty-five-year-old émigré who had changed his name from Wolfgang Grajonca, organized the psychedelic groundswell in San Francisco. In 1965, after staging two benefit concerts as the manager of the San Francisco Mime Troupe, Graham decided to concentrate his efforts on the concert scene, first coordinating the Trips Festival for Ken Kesey and his Merry Pranksters. By March 1966, Graham had secured a three-year lease on the Fillmore, which became a popular dance hall in the Haight. He also began to manage the Fillmore house band, the Jefferson Airplane, and later the Grateful Dead. Although never “a great fan of high volume rock-and-roll, and a lot of it was nonsensical to me,” Graham took pride in his organizational abilities. “I was always, ‘Well, I took your ticket and you came here expecting something, and I want you to have that,’” he recalled. “I want the food to be hot and the drinks to be cold.” Marty Balin of the Airplane asserted, “Bill Graham was the star of the sixties. In the beginning there was great talent, but there were no sound systems. No microphones. Graham came along and changed it. He made the performers a stage. He was what Alan Freed was to the fifties.”

The acid-inspired music, organized locally by Graham, reached youths across the country through airplay on FM radio. During the 1940s, the Federal

Communications Commission (FCC) had encouraged AM radio stations to create counterparts on FM bands. In 1964, after issuing a moratorium on new AM licenses, the FCC decided that at least half of the airtime on FM stations in cities of 100,000 or more people had to be original programming.

Psychedelic music appeared in this new FM context. Not produced for the Top-Forty play list of AM radio, the meandering psychedelic sounds first aired on the free-wheeling San Francisco station KMPX on the programs of disc jockeys such as Larry Miller and Tom Donahue. "Somewhere in the dim misty days of yore, some radio station statistician decided that regardless of chronological age, the average mental age of the audience was twelve and a half, and Top-Forty AM radio aimed its message directly at the lowest common denominator," sniped Donahue. "The disc jockeys have become robots performing their inanities at the direction of programmers who had succeeded in totally squeezing blips and bleeps and happy, oh yes, always happy sounding cretins who are poured from a bottle every three hours." To eradicate the "rotting corpse stinking up the airwaves," the San Francisco jockey used FM radio to air songs that lasted more than three minutes, began to spin entire albums, discontinued the breakneck delivery of Top-Forty disc jockeys, and played songs by the new groups in the Bay area. When confronted by an unhappy owner and a strike at KMPX, Donahue and his staff took their hip format to KSAN, which poster artist Alton Kelley described as a "community drum." Soon FM stations in other parts of the country began to adopt Donahue's format and broadcast psychedelia across the airwaves.

Promoted by FM radio, acid rock started to scale the charts. In June 1967, the Jefferson Airplane, the first Haight band signed by a major label, hit number three with *Surrealistic Pillow*, an album that included the guitar of Jerry Garcia in the background. That same year, the Grateful Dead cracked the charts with its self-named debut LP. By the next year, Quicksilver Messenger Service charted with its first album. The Doors, probably the best-selling West Coast band, in early 1967 neared the top of the chart with its self-named debut album and later the same year hit the Top Five with *Strange Days*. In late 1968, they topped the chart with *Waiting for the Sun*. The Doors also scored with singles such as "People Are Strange," "Love Me Two Times," and "Touch Me," as well as the chart-topping "Light My Fire" and "Hello, I Love You."

Other bands jumped on the psychedelic bandwagon. In 1967, the lovable, mop-topped Beatles released two influential number-one albums: *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, which included the cryptic "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds," reputedly LSD for short; and *Magical Mystery Tour*, a soundtrack to a movie modeled after Ken Kesey's travels in his psychedelic bus. Later that year, the bubbly Paul McCartney admitted that he had taken LSD. The Beatles began to study transcendental meditation with Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, and George and Pattie Harrison, wearing heart-shaped granny glasses and paisley frocks, took a ceremonial tour of the Haight district. That same year, the Rolling Stones released *Their Satanic Majesties' Request*, a psychedelic album featuring a three-dimensional cover, and Mick Jagger joined the Beatles in transcendental meditation. Eric Burdon of the Animals, after abandoning the blues for psychedelia, told *Melody Maker*, "It wasn't me singing. It was someone trying to be an American Negro. I look back and see how stupid I was." Adorned in vibrantly colored shirts and love beads, Burdon sang such odes to hippiedom as "San



The Doors. Photo by Joel Brodsky. Jeffrey Jampol. Joel Brodsky/Elektra Records.

Franciscan Nights" and "Monterey." Even Dick Clark changed with the times to mas-
termind the movie *The Love Children*, which starred a young Jack Nicholson.

By 1967, acid rock had spread to youths throughout the country. Philadelphia hippies danced at the Electric Factory. Adherents to the counterculture flocked to acid rock shows at the Tea Party Ballroom in Boston, at the Kinetic Playground in Chicago, and at the Grande Ballroom in Detroit, where Russ Gibb, inspired by Family Dog concerts in San Francisco, coordinated the events and Gary Grimshaw designed flowing psychedelic posters. In New York, hippies frequented the Electric Circus and the Fillmore East, which Bill Graham had designed as an East Coast counterpart to the San Francisco original. Acid rock had become a national phenomenon.

Psychedelic London

The counterculture developed on the other side of the Atlantic in swinging London. In 1966, Michael Hollingshead brought 6,000 tabs of acid to England that he obtained from Timothy Leary, with a mission to turn on London. He opened the World Psychedelic Centre (WPC) in Chelsea and started his work. The same year, Nigel Waymouth opened the alternative clothing store Granny Takes a Trip, stocked with velvet jackets, Native American-styled garb, and wild-colored shirts and trousers. "It was a rebellion against conventional outfits," Waymouth contended. "Why can't things be more androgynous? Why can't men wear flowered jackets with their long hair? Why can't we wear velvet as a kind of aesthetic thing?"

The communication network for the growing London counterculture emerged at the same time. Peter Jenner, a lecturer at the London School of Economics, started the London Free School and hoped to "connect traditional disciplines in a relevant 'modern' manner." In 1966 Barry Miles and photojournalist John "Hoppy" Hopkins launched the underground newspaper *International Times*, which, according to Jenner, "was all about enlightenment and freeing your head from all the old hang-ups."

Simultaneously, acid rock burst on the London scene. In late 1966 Joe Boyd, who had traveled from his native America to the UK branch of Elektra Records in London, met "Hoppy" Hopkins. After witnessing Fillmore shows in San Francisco and looking for a way to raise money for the fledgling *International Times*, Boyd joined with Hopkins to stage concerts. Leasing a club on Friday nights after 11:00 P.M., the duo established the UFO club, which featured light shows, poetry readings, well-known rock acts such as Jimi Hendrix, and avant-garde art by Yoko Ono. They hired the Art Nouveau-inspired Michael English and Nigel Waymouth as poster artists, who called themselves Hapshash and the Colored Coat and designed sinuous, vibrant silkscreen posters that advertised many of the UFO happenings. "We felt like we were illustrating an ideal," remembered Waymouth. "We were trying to give a visual concept of what we were experiencing, which was like hallucinations."

The UFO also featured local house bands such as Pink Floyd. Named after country bluesmen Pink Anderson and Floyd Council, the band began by playing R&B music at the Marquee Club. Fueled by the psychedelic energy of front man Syd Barrett and the vision of their comanager Peter Jenner, Pink Floyd quickly embraced psychedelia. In 1966 they moved toward an airy acid rock and played at a benefit for the London Free School, performed at the Roundhouse to launch the *International Times*, and on December 23 played the first show at the UFO. In March 1967 they debuted with the first British Top-twenty acid-rock single "Arnold Layne," cracked the Top Ten with "See Emily Play," and by the summer introduced a spacey electronic sound to the British Top Ten with *Piper at the Gates of Dawn*. On April 29, 1967, with several other bands, they spearheaded the 14-Hour Technicolor Dream event at Alexandra Palace that attracted more than 10,000 members of the London counterculture, who came to support the underground *International Times* that had been closed on alleged obscenity charges.

The Soft Machine, another free-flowing UFO band, epitomized English psychedelia. The outfit, "all middle-class kids from literary backgrounds" according to cofounder Kevin Ayers, rejected the aspirations of their parents. Prodded by coleader Daavid Allen, they read the American Beats, lifting their name from William Burroughs. The group lived together communally and developed a hippie ethic. "It was just to be nice to each other, and don't step on other people's toes and infringe on their freedom," explained Ayers.

By the end of 1967, London teens had fully adopted the hippie culture. Youths experimented with acid tests, rallied for an underground newspaper, opened alternative clothing shops, boasted their own psychedelic bands, and crowded into their own version of the Fillmore. Most important, they accepted a new way of looking at the world. "The whole movement was about a change in attitude from aggression to peace," insisted Steve Howe, who had played at the UFO with the band Tomorrow and later became the guitarist for Yes. "It was a very euphoric time."

The Decline and Fall of Hippiedom

The counterculture had a short-lived heyday, falling victim to its own drug-based logic. Many hippies, initially using drugs to increase awareness and open alternative realities, became wasted addicts. As some youths repeatedly tried to delve deeper and deeper into their own consciousnesses with LSD, they became isolated and detached from their own bodies. In the street vernacular, these hippies "burned out." Others became hooked on drugs that seemed to promise freedom. By 1967, many Haight residents had become methedrine or "speed" addicts who, according to Dr. Ellis D. ("LSD") Sox, the San Francisco public health director, cost the city \$35,000 a month for treatment. "You had a lot of people talking to posts," remembered Travis Rivers, then owner of the Print Mint, which sold psychedelic posters in the Haight. "They were ripping one another off, because it costs a lot of money once you get strung out on speed."

Some of the major figures in the Haight drug culture fell prey to the guns of gangland. On August 3, 1967, John Kent Carter, a dealer known as "Shob," was found murdered with his arms hacked off at the elbows. Three days later, William "Superspade" Thomas ended up in a sleeping bag with a bullet through his head at the bottom of a cliff in Marin County.

The saga of Skip Spence provides a moving testimony to the perils of drug experimentation. Alexander ("Skip") Spence was the original drummer for the Jefferson Airplane, composing "Blues from an Airplane." When he quit the Airplane to form the pathbreaking psychedelic band Moby Grape, he began to overindulge in psychedelics and suffered a mental breakdown. Confided Skip: "Acid was like heaven, a moment of God, inspiring, tragic. I must have taken it a hundred times, a thousand times." One day, Spence reached too high. He woke up in a hospital: "An overdose where I died and was brought back to life." Before his untimely death at fifty-three in 1999, the scraggly, unwashed ex-rock star lived in San Jose, where he spent his \$7-a-day allowance from the state. At night, when he did not confine himself to the psychiatric ward of a San Jose hospital, Spence stayed alone in a dingy, rundown room in the Maas Hotel. Sometimes he spoke to Joan of Arc. Once in a while he was visited by Clark Kent, who the drummer/guitarist found to be "civilized, decent and a genius." And on a few thick, intense, San Jose summer nights, Spence met his "master," who materialized with startling revelations. Asserted Spence, delivering his own epitaph, "I'm a derelict. I'm a world savior. I am drugs. I am rock-and-roll."

A passive, accepting psychedelic worldview, unlocked by mind-expanding drugs, also made hippiedom susceptible to co-optation. Most hippies, such as Jerry Garcia, considered themselves to be "conscious tools of the universe," who were directed by "cosmic forces" that bound disparate individuals and events into a logical pattern. They believed in an almost preordained "flow" that would sweep everyone into a cohesive psychedelic community and disregarded outside forces, which undermined their vision.

Businessmen, resistant to the flow of the cosmic community, began to exploit and commercialize the counterculture. During early 1967, more than twenty shops opened their doors in the Haight-Ashbury district to cater to the tourist traffic. The Pall Mall Lounge began to market "love burgers," and one store began to sell hippie

costumes to weekenders: scraggly wigs for \$85 and beards for \$125. Even the Greyhound Bus Company started a "Hippie Hop" in San Francisco, advertised as "the only foreign tour within the continental limits of the United States." "Haight Street is no longer fun," complained Tsvi Strauch, an original hippie proprietor in the Haight. "Many of us are getting away from it because of all the plastic hippies and tourists that are fouling up the whole scene. They've made a mess of it."

On October 4, 1967, Jay Thelin closed the Psychedelic Shop, a hub of the Bay area counterculture, and posted a sign on the front door: "Be Free—Nebraska Needs You More." Two days later, a procession of original hippies in the Haight district loaded a coffin full of beads, peace signs, flowers, and other symbols of their lifestyle and publicly burned it, announcing the "death of hippie, loyal son of media." That same day, the Fugs coordinated a similar procession in the East Village, memorializing the hippie culture. "The tourist buses started coming through. Then they [hippies] left," summarized one Haight resident. "The kids went out to the country. Bolinas, Santa Rosa, Healdsburg, Auburn, Santa Cruz. Basically, they all left the city and it became a very different situation. More drugs came in and it was an angrier crowd. There were some homicides in the Haight-Ashbury. A lot of rapes, many of them unreported, came down. Essentially, there was a dissipation of the environment."

Even acid rock, the music of the counterculture, became subsumed by the recording industry. Though complaining about the corporate structure of the music industry, the psychedelic rockers readily signed contracts with the major record labels that marketed the psychedelic sound with new promotional strategies to reach a national audience. "We found we couldn't sell the Grateful Dead's records in a traditional manner," said Joe Smith, at the time the president of Warner-Reprise. "You couldn't take your ad in *Billboard* and sell a record that way. . . . The packaging was important. The cult was important. Free concerts where you handed out fruit and nuts were important" as well as exposure on the underground club circuit, the campuses, and FM radio. Gil Frieson, then vice president of A&M Records, assembled a Standard American Promotional Package—"billboards on Sunset Strip and Broadway, full-page advertising in the underground press, the trades, and various other outlets; radio spots and a promotional tour with all expenses paid by the label." Bill Siddons, manager of the Doors, complained, "It's funny, the group out there on the stage preaching a revolutionary message, but to get the message to the people, you gotta do it in the establishment way."

By late 1967, acid rock and the counterculture it exemplified had been drawn into the competitive society it attacked. "When the Summer of Love happened, that was it," recalled Bill Thompson, a manager of the Jefferson Airplane. "It had all started happening in the summer of 1965 and it was over by the summer of 1967." The psychedelic baby boomers, armed with flowers and a hopeful spirit, would soon confront the M-1 rifles of National Guardsmen, who would turn the brightly colored hopes of hippiedom into a dark nightmare of war-torn campuses.

Fire from the Streets

11

"Soul is sass, man."

—Claude Brown

Four o'clock on a muggy, steamy Sunday morning in Detroit, July 22, 1967. A crowd of young African Americans clustered around a pack of police squad cars on the corner of Twelfth Street and Clairmount, the heart of the city's West Side ghetto. As two hundred African Americans pressed against one another to get a better view of the action, blue-shirted, white-faced policemen herded eighty-two captives into paddy wagons. The arrested African Americans had been accused of drinking liquor after hours at the United Community League for Civic Action, which hosted a party for two returning veterans from Vietnam. After finishing their job by 5:00 A.M., the policemen jumped into squad cars, revved the engines, and started to move out of the area. Someone in the crowd flung a full wine bottle through the air, shattering the windshield of the car driven by Sergeant Arthur Howison of the Tenth Precinct. Howison slammed on the brakes and leapt onto the street. He was pelted first by a few stones and then by a barrage of rocks and bottles. The police officer ducked back into the car and sped off, followed by the angry mob.

The crowd, recently incensed by the killing of African-American veteran Danny



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Thomas by a band of white thugs, multiplied as it made its way down Twelfth Street, until it had grown to three thousand agitated men, women, and youths. Someone grabbed a brick from the pavement and hurled it through the window of a grocery store. People swarmed toward the jagged opening. They poked out the rest of the glass in the window frame with sticks, jumped into the store, and began gathering armloads of meat, bread, and canned goods. One man struggled with an entire side of beef. "I've always wanted to be a butcher," he told an onlooker.

Around daybreak, some teens overturned a line of garbage cans and set the trash on fire. Another man threw a homemade firebomb into a shoe store that already had been sacked. Summer breezes fanned the flames, which spread to adjoining buildings. Within a few hours, columns of fire engulfed East Detroit and spread across Woodward Avenue into the western part of the city. Williams' Drug Store and Lou's Men's Wear, along with hundreds of other buildings, disappeared in flames. "It looks like 1945 in Berlin," reported a dejected Mayor Jerome Cavanaugh, who had been credited with the idea for the Model Cities Program and just a year earlier could boast that *Look* magazine had named Detroit the All-American City.

The rioting and looting continued for the next four days. Enraged African Americans ravaged thousands of stores, searching for food, clothing, furniture, and liquor. They spared only the storefronts that had been marked "Soul Brother" or "Afro All the Way." Fires set by the rioters gutted 19 square miles of Detroit, causing an estimated \$40 million in damage. "Man, this is crazy," one older African American told *Newsweek*. "We're burnin' our own houses up. Where are these poor people going to live now?" Another home owner echoed, "This is madness. Why do they have to burn our houses? That's not right. Goddamn. And there's not a house burning in Grosse Pointe [a white, middle-class suburb of Detroit]. This has got to stop." But other African Americans in the Motor City, unemployed and confined to dilapidated slums, were impatient for the reforms promised by the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and they predicted more trouble. Said one twenty-two-year-old youth, "We're tired of being second class. We've been asking too long. Now it's time to take. This thing ain't over. It's just beginning."

The authorities responded to the rioting with brutal armed force. During the first day of trouble, Mayor Cavanaugh unleashed his 4,000-man police force on the ghetto. When police proved inadequate, Michigan Governor George Romney mobilized 7,300 state troopers and National Guardsmen armed with tear gas, grenade launchers, M-1 rifles, submachine guns, M-48 tanks, and Huey helicopters. "I'm gonna shoot anything that moves and is black," vowed one young Guardsman. The next day, President Lyndon Johnson airlifted Task Force Detroit, a 4,700-man paratrooper unit commanded by Lieutenant General John L. Throckmorton, who had served as a deputy to General William Westmoreland in Vietnam. All told, a 16,000-man army marched into Detroit to quell the tumult. The city had become an armed camp divided into war zones, cordoned off by barbed wire and patrolled by helmeted troops in khakis.

After the fires had been stamped out and the smoke had cleared, the authorities counted 43 dead, 2,250 injured, and 7,200 arrested, the worst civil disorder in twentieth-century America. Most of the casualties were African-American men. On national



A huge pall of smoke pours from a burning building during race riots in Detroit, 1967. Photo by POPPERFOTO. Permission by Alamy Images.

television, President Johnson pleaded that the "violence must be stopped—quickly, finally, and permanently. There are no victors in the aftermath of violence. . . . We have endured a week such as no nation should live through: a time of violence and tragedy."

The cause of the Detroit riot stemmed from the poor economic conditions of African Americans in the inner city, which stood in stark contrast to the promise of the Civil Rights Act. As whites fled from the cities to the suburbs, African Americans remained in nearly abject poverty. Despite low national unemployment, nearly 30 percent of the Detroit rioters were unemployed, and many others held low-skilled, low-paid jobs. Most saw few prospects for a better wage and attributed their condition to racism. Only a small percentage owned their own homes, and most lived in fear of being robbed or beaten on the streets and wanted to move from their neighborhoods. After playing an active role in the civil rights movement, some Detroit rioters despaired of change through nonviolence. The Detroiters, remarked civil rights leader Roger Wilkins, "saw Congress pass those laws in 1964 and 1965. When they looked around, they saw that nothing, absolutely nothing, was changing in their lives. They were still poor, they were still jobless, they still lived in miserable housing, their kids still went to lousy schools."

The depressed economic conditions among inner-city African Americans caused riots elsewhere. In August 1965, only days after the passage of the Voters Act, the Watts section of Los Angeles exploded in violence for six days, leaving thirty-four persons dead, 4,000 arrested, and entire blocks burned to the ground. "What we didn't have in Watts wasn't civil rights," related one resident. "It was jobs, housing and education." Nearly 30 percent of African-American males and 50 percent of African-American teenagers could not find jobs, and more than 60 percent of Watts residents lived on government relief. When 30,000 African Americans rioted in Watts, they appropriated a slogan of Los Angeles disc jockey Magnificent Montague by chanting "burn, baby, burn" to white America. "People didn't look at themselves as committing a crime," explained one rioter. "They had lived through all that deprivation, and they were now uplifted."

Disgruntled African Americans rioted in other urban areas. In 1966, trouble erupted in Chicago, San Francisco, and Atlanta. During 1967, in the aftermath of the Detroit riot, problems surfaced in Michigan cities such as Pontiac, Saginaw, Flint, Grand Rapids, Albion, and Kalamazoo. During the last days of July, looters sacked stores in the African-American neighborhoods of Phoenix, Hartford, Passaic, Poughkeepsie, and South Bend. The next month, four nights of violence ripped through Milwaukee, leaving four dead and more than 100 injured. African Americans in nearby Chicago took to the streets, and riots scarred Providence and Wichita. During the first eight months of 1967, race riots had torn apart more than 131 cities and had left a trail of eighty-three dead, thousands injured, and blocks of charred rubble. One government report estimated that 41 percent of the cities with populations of more than 100,000 had experienced racial violence. The press called it the "long hot summer."

On April 4, 1968, another wave of violence swept the country after the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who had become increasingly convinced of the need for economic as well as political equality and had just begun to organize the Poor People's Campaign. "When White America killed Dr. King," sneered African-American militant Stokely Carmichael, "she declared war on us. . . . We have to retaliate for the deaths of our leaders. The executions of those deaths are going to be in the streets."

Carmichael proved to be prophetic. A few hours after the King assassination, Washington, D.C., burst into flames. As described by *Newsweek*, the more than 700 fires in the national capital, the worst conflagration in the city since the British burned it during the War of 1812, "made Washington look like the besieged capital of a banana republic, with helmeted combat troops, bayoneted rifles at the ready guarding the White House, and a light machine-gun post defending the steps of the Capitol." President Lyndon Johnson activated nearly 15,000 troops—more than twice the size of the U.S. garrison that defended Khe Sanh in Vietnam—to quiet the violence. In three days of rioting, the death toll reached ten, and property damage exceeded \$13.3 million.

Other African-American populated urban areas exploded after receiving news about the King assassination. In Kansas City, six rioters died and sixty-five were injured. Chicago's riot, quelled by 5,000 federal troops and 6,700 National

Guardsmen, left eleven dead, ninety-one injured, and miles of burned-out buildings. By the end of the week, 168 cities had erupted into violence; 5,117 fires had been started; almost 2,000 shops had been ransacked; \$40 million worth of property had been destroyed; and forty-six people, mostly African Americans, had died. It took almost 73,000 U.S. Army and National Guard troops to quell the disturbances.

The urban riots reflected and were in part incited by such firebrands as Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, H. Rap Brown, and leaders of the growing Black Panther Party, such as Bobby Seale and Huey Newton, who preached a doctrine of militant African-American pride and self-determination. Carmichael, who coined the term *black power*, had joined the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee and reluctantly had worked for change through nonviolent tactics. Radicalized by the Vietnam War and the struggle of African nations to shed their colonial rulers, he increasingly viewed the struggle of African Americans within a colonial context and adopted the tenets of militants such as Malcolm X, who preached a doctrine of political and economic equality without whites rather than integration. After the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., Carmichael and others abandoned nonviolence for a militant stance. "If America don't come around, we're going to burn America down," threatened H. Rap Brown. In 1967 and 1968, many African Americans had dramatically reasserted their collective identity, an identity born in slavery and shaped by a century of discrimination. They called their reclaimed identity *soul*.

Soul Music

Soul music reflected the militant search for an African-American identity. The term *soul* had been used by African Americans during the 1950s to suggest the essence of being an African American in the United States. African-American jazz musicians, some of whom had converted to Islam, had soul: In 1957, horn man Lou Donaldson recorded *Swing and Soul*; the next year, saxophone great John Coltrane released *Soultrane*; and several more jazz artists released albums with similar titles over the next few years. During the early 1960s, Eldridge Cleaver noted in *Soul on Ice* that many referred to jazz as "soul music."

Around 1965, as the African-American ghettos of Watts and Harlem erupted in violence, many African Americans started to equate soul with the struggle to reassert African-American dignity in the face of continued discrimination. "Soul is sass, man," wrote Claude Brown, author of *Manchild in the Promised Land* (1965). "Soul is arrogance. Soul is walkin' down the street in a way that says, 'This is me, muhfu' . . . Soul is that uninhibited, no, *extremely* uninhibited self-expression that goes into practically every Negro endeavor. That's soul. And there's a swagger in it, man." Writer Arnold Shaw came to the same conclusion in *The World of Soul*: "Soul is black, not blue, sass, anger and rage. . . . It is an expressive explosiveness, ignited by a people's discovery of self-pride, power and potential for growth."

Emphasizing the value of their culture, African Americans began to refer to chitterlings, collard greens, black-eyed peas, candied yams, and sweet potato pie as soul food, and fellow African Americans became soul brothers and soul sisters. After

the Detroit riots, "there was a strong sense of brotherhood and sisterhood," noted Detroit bookstore owner Ed Vaughn. "We saw more and more sisters begin to wear natural hairdos, and more and more brothers begin to wear their hair in the new natural styles. More and more people began to wear dashikis." With the newfound African-American consciousness, rhythm and blues became soul music.

Some of the "soul" performers had been involved in R&B long before it underwent a name change. James Brown, "Soul Brother Number One," released his first record "Please, Please, Please" with his Famous Flames in early 1956. "I first dug Little Richard at the Two Spot, down on the corner of Fifth and Walnut," remembered Brown. "Seeing Little Richard sing 'Tutti Frutti' and getting over, I went on to the WIBB studios in 1954 to do a demo of 'Please, Please, Please.'" Two years later Brown scaled the R&B chart with "Try Me" and in 1960 reworked the 5 Royales' "Think" for a hit.

By October 1962, when he recorded the now legendary album *Live at the Apollo*, Brown had perfected a stunning stage act, complete with a backup band and vocal group known as the James Brown Revue. In a typical performance, the singer leapt on stage wearing skin-tight black pants, a half-unbuttoned, dark-blue satin shirt, and a purple cape. Without missing a beat, his head jerking to the music, he suddenly jumped into the air, landed in a perfect split, and bounced back to his feet. Before the audience recovered, Brown was twirling in midair.

Ray Charles, considered the "Genius of Soul" during the mid-1960s, initially gained fame in R&B. Born Ray Charles Robinson on September 23, 1930, Charles



James Brown. The hardest-working man in rock-and-roll. Photo by Matt McVay. *Permission by The Seattle Times.*

traveled from the South to Seattle in 1947 to play cocktail-swing piano in a Nat King Cole style. In 1949, he cut his first disc, "Confession Blues," and two years later followed with the R&B hit "Baby Let Me Hold Your Hand." During the next few years, he toured with blues growler Lowell Fulson, R&B singer Ruth Brown, African-American comic Jackie "Moms" Mabley, and Eddie "Guitar Slim" Jones.

In June 1952, Atlantic Records, a leading company in the R&B field, bought Ray's contract for \$2,500. During the summer of 1953, Atlantic president Ahmet Ertegun and vice president Jerry Wexler "ran into Ray at Cosimo's famous small studio, and Ray asked us to please do a session with him. . . . This was the landmark session because it had Ray Charles originals, Ray Charles arrangements, a Ray Charles band." The session produced the single "Don't You Know," his first chart success for Atlantic. The singer-pianist quickly followed with "I've Got a Woman," one of his most notable hits, which reached number two on the R&B chart. During the rest of the 1950s, he scored repeatedly with the R&B audience. In 1955, he hit with "A Fool for You" and "This Little Girl of Mine"; the next year, he scored with "I'll Drown in My Own Tears," and "Hallelujah, I Love Her So." By 1959, Brother Ray reached the *Billboard* Top Ten with "What'd I Say" to firmly establish himself as a major figure in R&B.

Wilson Pickett, although not as prominent in the 1950s as Ray Charles, had roots in early R&B. One day in 1959, as Pickett lounged on his porch strumming a guitar and singing, Willie Schofield, a member of the R&B group the Falcons, happened to pass by. According to Pickett, Schofield walked up to him and said, "Man, you got a good voice," and invited me to come to the next rehearsal. That's when I found I could sing rhythm and blues." Pickett joined the Falcons and added lead vocals to their 1962 hit "I Found a Love."

Otis Redding, recognized as "The King of Soul" by some, initially drew his inspiration from Little Richard. In an unlikely success story that took place in October 1962, Redding chauffeured a band, Johnny Jenkins and the Pinetoppers, to the Stax studio in Memphis for a recording session. "They had thirty minutes left in the studio and I asked if I could do a song," remembered Redding, who previously had recorded some unsuccessful Little Richard-sounding songs. "He did one of those heh, heh, baby things," recalled Stax president Jim Stewart. "It was just like Little Richard. I told them the world didn't need another Little Richard. Then someone suggested he do a slow one. He did 'These Arms of Mine.'" Impressed by the song, Stewart signed Redding and released the song, which hit the Top Twenty on the R&B chart and crossed over to the national chart. In early 1964, Redding cut *Pain in My Heart*, a mixture of Little Richard screamers and Sam Cooke-type ballads that nearly cracked the Top 100.

Most soul artists, as with R&B performers of the 1950s, started their careers in the church. Wilson Pickett had sung in the gospel group the Violinaires before joining the Falcons; he described his style as "a gospel melody, not nothing pretty, a funky groove with lines that mean something." Eddie Floyd, who in 1966 hit with the archetypical soul of "Knock on Wood," had helped start the Falcons, who had begun as a gospel group and drifted toward R&B by the time Pickett joined. Percy Sledge had sung with his cousin's gospel group, the Singing Clouds. Garnet Mimms, who charted in 1963 with the Top Ten "Cry Baby," had sung with the Philadelphia gospel groups

the Evening Star Quartet and the Harmonizing Four, and had cut his first record with the gospel troupe, the Norfolk Four. As a youngster, Dave Prater, who later teamed up with Sam Moore as Sam and Dave, had sung and recorded with the gospel group, the Sensational Hummingbirds. Sam Moore, the son of a Baptist minister, had been a member of the gospel group, the Melonaires.

Solomon Burke had close ties to the church. He had worked as a boy preacher, had been a broadcaster on the religious show *Solomon's Temple*, and had soloed in his family's own Philadelphia church, The House of God for All People. Before turning to secular music in 1955, he had debuted with the single "Christmas Presents from Heaven."

Otis Redding and James Brown had learned about music in the church. The son of a minister, Redding had sung in the Mount Ivy Baptist Church choir as a young boy. "Otis and I were very close," remembered Katie Webster, who played piano for Redding. "It was a spiritual thing. Both our fathers were ministers, and we would read the Bible together." James Brown had played organ and drums during the 1940s for various gospel outfits. "I sang gospel in prison," recalled the singer. "Once I got out I joined Sarah Byrd's group, the Gospel Starlighters."

Ray Charles's music reflected his religious upbringing, having sang as a youth in the Shiloh Baptist Church in Greenville, Florida. He replaced the Pilgrim Travelers' "I've Got a New Home" with "Lonely Avenue" and shortened "Nobody But You, Lord" to "Nobody But You." He changed the gospel standard "This Little Light of Mine" to "This Little Girl of Mine," switched "I've Got a Savior (Way Over Jordan)" to "I've Got a Woman," and exulted in gospel screams in "Hallelujah, I Love Her So." "Now I'd been singing spirituals since I was three and I'd been singing the blues for just as long," explained Charles. "So what could be more natural than to combine them? It didn't take any thinking, didn't take any calculating. All the sounds were there, right at the top of my head." Added bluesman Big Bill Broonzy about Ray Charles, "He's cryin', sanctified. He's mixing the blues with the spirituals. He should be singing in a church."

Aretha Franklin, the 5-foot-5-inch dynamo dubbed "Lady Soul," had a direct connection to the church. Her father, the Reverend Clarence L. Franklin, served as the pastor of Detroit's 4,500-member New Bethel Baptist Church and recorded more than seventy albums of fiery, blues-drenched sermons. Two white-uniformed nurses commonly stood guard at the aisles of New Bethel Baptist to aid parishioners, who were overcome by the emotionally draining message of the minister. As a youth, Aretha came into contact with gospel greats such as James Cleveland and Mahalia Jackson, and at a funeral of an aunt, she witnessed Clara Ward belt out a powerful rendition of "Peace in the Valley." At that moment, the minister's daughter later recollected, "I wanted to become a singer." Aretha began to learn gospel from James Cleveland: "He showed me some real nice chords and I liked his deep, deep sound. There's a whole lot of earthiness in the way he sings, and what he was feelin', I was feelin', but I just didn't know how to put it across. The more I watched him, the more I got out of it." Soon Aretha joined a family organized traveling gospel troupe, before signing with Columbia Records. The soul of Aretha Franklin had matured in the church.

Atlantic Records distributed most of the gospel-based R&B, which would become known as soul music. The company had been established in 1947 by Ahmet Ertegun, a son of the Turkish ambassador to the United States. An avid jazz and blues

record collector, he auctioned 15,000 78-rpm discs to start Atlantic Records with fellow record collector Herb Abramson, who had been a part-time producer for National Records. In 1949, Atlantic scored its first hit with the R&B song "Drinking Wine, Spo-Dee-O-Dee," by Stick McGee. During the next fifteen years, Atlantic produced a variety of jazz and R&B artists, hitting the R&B charts with performers such as former Drifter Clyde McPhatter, Big Joe Turner ("Shake, Rattle, and Roll"), LaVern Baker ("Tweedle Dee"), and Chuck Willis ("C. C. Rider").

Building on their success with Ray Charles, who as early as 1959 had been promoted as a "soul brother" by the company, Atlantic began to produce more soul acts. In late 1960, Ertegun signed Solomon Burke, who in 1965 topped the R&B chart and neared the Top Twenty with "Got to Get You Off My Mind." The year that Burke scaled the charts, Atlantic Records lured Wilson Pickett from the Double L.L. label. For the next two years, Atlantic had success with Pickett, who charted with "In the Midnight Hour," "634-5789," "Land of a 1,000 Dances," and "Mustang Sally." Percy Sledge, the Alabama farm boy who had chopped cotton as a youth, joined the Atlantic stable and in 1966 topped the singles chart with "When a Man Loves a Woman."

Atlantic also distributed the music of artists on Stax Records. In 1958, the brother-sister team of Jim Stewart and Estelle Axton started the Memphis-based Satellite Records and recording studio, which they renamed Stax three years later. The new label initially recorded local talent such as African-American disc jockey Rufus Thomas and his daughter Carla, who in 1959 dueted for the regional hit "Cause I Love You." In 1961, Carla delivered Stax's first national hit with the Top Ten "Gee Whiz (Look at His Eyes)." After the success of the Thomas duo, the label signed other African-American artists such as William Bell. "We just didn't sit down and say, 'We're going on with the black music,'" mentioned Stewart. "Once we had the success with Rufus and Carla it was as though we cut off a whole part of our lives that had existed previously. We never looked back from there." In 1960, on the strength of their success with local acts, Stax signed an agreement with Atlantic to distribute its records.

Stax gave artists who recorded at its studio on McLemore Avenue a distinctive sound, which was created by the Stax house band, Booker T. and the MGs. The band originally consisted of several high school friends, including Packy Axton, Estelle's son. By 1962, the band had solidified into a racially integrated rhythm section: keyboardist Booker T. Jones; drummer Al Jackson, Jr.; guitarist Steve Cropper, who drew his inspiration from 5 Royales' guitarist Lowman Pauling; and bassist Lewis Steinberg, who in March 1964 was replaced by Donald "Duck" Dunn. The band, who in 1962 hit with its own number-three smash, "Green Onions," played with the Memphis Horns, anchored by Andrew Love and Wayne Jackson, to back virtually every artist who recorded at Stax, including Wilson Pickett, Percy Sledge, Otis Redding, and Sam and Dave.

Sam and Dave, the "Double Dynamite" soul duo from Miami, were discovered by Atlantic vice president Jerry Wexler, who agreed to let the duo record for Stax. From 1966 to 1968, they hit with "I Thank You," and their trademark, "Hold On, I'm Coming."

The gospel-based rhythm and blues, recorded by Atlantic and Stax, became known as soul music during the mid-1960s, when many African Americans discovered a sense of self-esteem. In 1965, station WOL in Washington, D.C., attracting primarily

African-American listeners, began to call itself "soul radio," local disc jockey Fred Correy labeled himself "Soulfinger," and *Soul* magazine began publication. In 1965 and 1966, Otis Redding perfected his style with several albums, culminating in *Otis Blue (Otis Redding Sings Soul)*, which included the hit "Respect."

Around the same time, James Brown began to perfect a new style called "funk," which became part of the soul culture. From 1956, when he began to record secular music, to his breakthrough *Live at the Apollo* album six years later, Brown sang a mixture of gospel and spirited blues. In late 1964, with the single "Out of Sight," he unveiled a new style that featured bursts of dominant, repeating, overpowering rhythm accented by phrase-shouting vocals and the staccato punchy sound of horns. The next year, the singer refined the funk style with "Papa's Got a Brand New Bag," which hit the national Top Ten, topped the R&B chart, and sold one million copies. Later in the year, Brown released the equally successful funk single "I Got You (I Feel Good)."

As Brown shifted from more traditional R&B to funk, he recalled, "I got the name 'Soul Brother Number One.' The word 'soul' by this time meant a lot of things—in music and out. It was about the roots of black music, and it was a kind of pride thing, too, being proud of yourself and your people. Soul music and the civil rights movement went hand in hand, sort of grew up together."

During 1965 and 1966, amid the civil rights movement, African Americans supported soul acts. Otis Redding broke attendance records at shows in Harlem and Watts, and in 1966 he grossed \$250,000 on a monthlong rhythm-and-blues tour. He earned enough money to start Jotis Records and helped to promote the career of Arthur Conley, who in 1967 neared the top of the chart with "Sweet Soul Music." James Brown bought a bright red Sting Ray, a fleet of Cadillacs, and a wardrobe of 150 suits and 80 pairs of shoes with the money he had amassed from the sale of records to an audience, which, except for the crossover interest in his *Live at the Apollo* album, consisted almost exclusively of African Americans. During the mid-1960s, while white youths listened to the Beatles, acid rock, or British blues-based bands such as the Rolling Stones, African Americans took pride in a gritty soul sound performed by fellow African Americans. "It's SOUL, man, SOUL," exclaimed African-American disc jockey Magnificent Montague in *Billboard*. "Now what is soul? It's the last to be hired, the first to be fired, brown all year-round, sit-in-the-back-of-the-bus feeling. You've got to live with us or you don't have it. The Black Brothers are the mainstay of our pop music today. Artists like John Lee Hooker, Otis Redding and others are heavy soul—one thing our English friends can't imitate."

Black Soul in White America

The inner-city explosions during the late 1960s made many Americans, especially those raised during the civil rights era, more aware of and interested in African-American culture. Though causing a white backlash in some quarters, the 1967 riots in Detroit allowed many whites to better understand the plight of African Americans. Discrimination "hurts them real bad. I'd probably be rioting right with them," a Texas salesman told *Time* magazine. Mrs. Margaret Lamb, a widow from Owensboro,

Kentucky, told *Time*: "It makes you wonder that they do as good as they do the way people treat them sometimes. You see things that make you wonder why they put up with it."

Sympathizing with African Americans, many young whites tried to adopt an African-American outlook. Radicalized students, protesting the war in Vietnam, embraced the ideology of militant Black Power groups such as the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, which in October 1966 formed in Oakland, a few miles from the Berkeley campus. "We had captured the imagination of the white radical left in this country to a point that its whole identification became connected with what the Black Panther Party was doing, how it was personifying things," boasted Panther cofounder Bobby Seale. The students also successfully lobbied for ethnic studies classes, which fostered a greater awareness of the contributions of African Americans to fields such as history, psychology, literature, and anthropology.

White youths also started to buy soul records. The year "1967 saw the greatest emergence of the blues in recent pop history. It was the year in which rhythm and blues became the music of the charts and the year in which 'soul' became the popular music of America," exclaimed Jon Landau, rock writer and later manager of Bruce Springsteen.

African-American soul crossed over into white America with Aretha Franklin. In August 1960, Aretha signed with John Hammond, the talent scout for Columbia Records who had discovered Count Basie, Benny Goodman, and Bob Dylan. Mitch Miller, the Columbia executive who had assailed rock during the 1950s, gave Franklin voice lessons, hooked her up with Bob Mersey, the musical arranger for pop singer



Aretha Franklin. Queen of soul. Permission by Atlantic Recording Corporation.

Barbra Streisand, and assigned her such pop material as the show tune "If Ever I Would Leave You" and Al Jolson's "Rock-a-Bye Your Baby with a Dixie Melody." By late 1966, a dissatisfied Aretha had found only moderate success and was in debt to Columbia.

When her contract with Columbia expired, Jerry Wexler of Atlantic Records signed the singer. Within a few months, Aretha recorded for Atlantic *I Never Loved a Man (the Way I Love You)*, which included the single "Respect." "Respect," an R&B hit for Otis Redding two years earlier, took on an added importance in 1967. The song, belted out by the Detroit native Aretha Franklin, hit the streets as the ghetto of the Motor City exploded into flames. To whites, it seemed to epitomize the renewed self-pride that African Americans had discovered. The chart-topping song sold more than one million copies in ten months and brought African-American soul into white America. The album reached number two on the chart.

Aretha continued to achieve crossover success. During the next two years, she charted with the million-selling singles "(You Make Me Feel Like a) Natural Woman" and "Chain of Fools" and hit the Top Five with the albums *Aretha Arrives*, *Aretha: Lady Soul*, and *Aretha Now*. In 1968, Aretha won the Best Female Vocalist of the Year award, and Detroit Mayor Jerome Cavanaugh declared Aretha Franklin Day. *Ebony* magazine characterized the summer of 1967 as "Retha, Rap [Brown], and Revolt." In July 1968, Aretha solidified her reputation among whites as the soul spokeswoman with her rendition of "Think," which ended with the singer crying, "Oh, Freedom, Freedom, ya, Freeeeeedom."

Other soul singers began to attract greater mainstream interest after the rioting. In 1967, Wilson Pickett hit the Top Ten with a remake of Dyke and the Blazers' "Funky Broadway" and spent eight weeks on the album chart with *The Best of Wilson Pickett*. Sam and Dave scored a crossover hit with the number-two "Soul Man." In 1968, James Brown reached the Top Ten with "Say It Loud—I'm Black and I'm Proud." Otis Redding, who died December 10, 1967, when his twin-engine Beechcraft plane plunged into icy lake Monoma outside of Madison, Wisconsin, won posthumous accolades for the chart-topping "(Sittin' On) The Dock of the Bay." The King of Soul, who had received little attention from the white audience during his lifetime until he electrified youths at the 1967 Monterey Pop Festival, hit the Top Five with the album *Dock of the Bay*.

Atlantic Records, which had produced many of the soul artists, began to reap financial rewards. In July 1967, *Time* calculated that "Manhattan-based Atlantic, with such singers as Aretha, Wilson Pickett and Sam and Dave, can now sell more records in a week (1,300,000) than it did in six months in 1950." Remarked Jerry Wexler in 1968: "The young white audience now digs soul the way the black does." Soul had become the music of white America.

Militant Blues 12 on Campus

"The pop scene has become a roaring, pulsating paradox of sound—the white man singing the black blues."

—*Time* magazine

Young college students took to the streets to protest the war in Vietnam as race riots swept across urban America. As the decade came to a close, the hopeful mood of psychedelia changed to a somber resolve and then a dark depression. During the late 1960s, young rock-and-rollers listened to desperate, loud blues that reflected the times.

Campus Unrest

The war in Vietnam triggered disturbances on American campuses. By 1963, President John Kennedy had sent more than 16,000 military advisors to help the South Vietnamese train their troops. Worried about the threat of communism in Southeast Asia, American officials slowly increased the U.S. commitment in Vietnam. In 1965, after Congress passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution that gave the president the authority to conduct military operations in Southeast Asia without declaring war, the number of American troops skyrocketed from 23,000 to 184,000. By 1968, the United States had sent 542,000 troops to the war-torn



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country. The U.S. government also embarked on a bombing campaign to quell the National Liberation Front of the North Vietnamese. Between 1965 when the bombing started and 1968, they dropped more than a million tons of bombs, rockets, and missiles during such campaigns as Operation Rolling Thunder and Operation Flaming Dart. Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force Curtis LeMay vowed to "bomb them [North Vietnamese] back into the Stone Age."

Small groups of youths, clustered in major universities such as University of California at Berkeley, started to protest against the war. In April 1967, in New York's Central Park, more than 100,000 demonstrators gathered for the Spring Mobilization to End the War in Vietnam. On the same day, 75,000 San Francisco protesters came together for the same purpose. Others started a draft resistance movement to "urge that other young men join us in noncooperation with the Selective Service System."

Many of the initial protests such as the October 21, 1967, levitating of the Pentagon were conducted in a hippie spirit. The Pentagon protest was organized by Abbie Hoffman, a civil rights organizer, and his friend Jerry Rubin, a coconspirator in the Youth International Party (Yippie), which, according to Rubin, "merged New Left politics with a psychedelic lifestyle. Our lifestyle—acid, long hair, freaky clothes, pot, rock music, sex—is the Revolution. Our very existence mocks America. The old order is dying." On October 21, Hoffman and Rubin, who had spoken at the Human Be-In, banded together with Allen Ginsberg, Ed Sanders of the Fugs, and others to levitate the Pentagon. Standing outside of the building with 150,000 adherents, the leaders chanted "in the name of the lives of the dead soldiers in Vietnam who were killed because of a bad karma, in the name of the Tyrone Power pound cake society in the sky, out demon out, out demon out." Unsuccessful in their attempt, the exorcising demonstrators were dispersed by the police, who arrested 647 protesters. "We wanted to be stoned, wasted, and free," asserted Ray Mongo, cofounder of the Liberation News Service, who had been arrested at the event. "We were proud of being individuals."

In 1968, student protests against the war became more serious and violent, driving a wedge between the hippies and radicals. After the Viet Cong had launched their Tet offensive and the United States had stepped up aerial bombardment and defoliation efforts, students at Columbia University occupied university buildings to protest the war. "Columbia was seen as part of a power structure linked to the same forces that were waging war in Vietnam," contended Allen Young of the Liberation News Service. "We viewed the disruption of university life as a necessary step. For life to go on as usual in the face of the horror of the Vietnam War was unacceptable and immoral."

In early May 1968, at 2:30 A.M., a thousand New York City policemen approached the Morningside Heights campus of Columbia University. They moved onto the campus in police vans and squad cars, sealed off the entrances to the university, and, on orders from Police Commissioner Howard Leary, marched toward five buildings that had been occupied by student rebels to protest the university's affiliation with the Institute for Defense Analysis. As they began to dislodge student militants, the police encountered resistance. At Fayerweather Hall, they clubbed and kicked angry students and newsmen such as columnist Walter Winchell. By midmorning, the police had dispersed the students from the buildings, arresting 698 and injur-

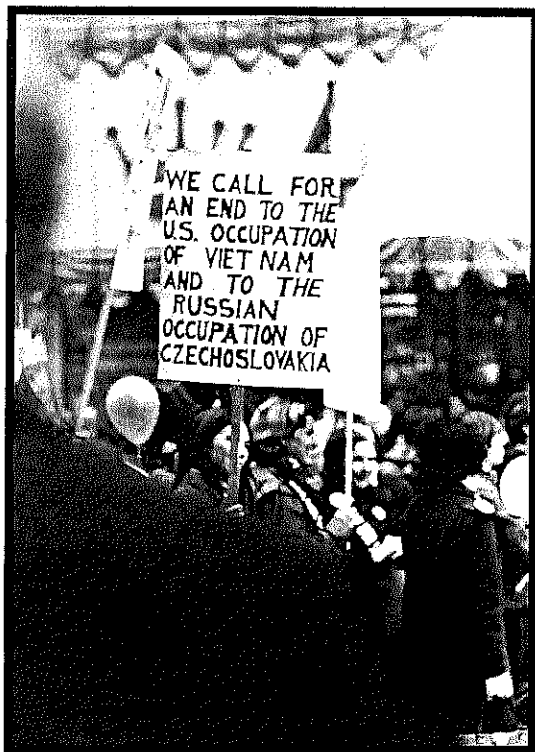
ing 120. To noted anthropologist Margaret Mead, who had taught at Columbia for forty-eight years, the police action signaled "the end of an epoch."

The protest at Columbia sparked trouble at other colleges and universities. More than 500 students at Princeton demonstrated in support of students at Columbia. At Stony Brook, 50 student militants staged a seventeen-hour sit-in to express their sympathy. More than 200 Temple University students picketed university buildings in the wake of the Columbia protests. By the middle of June, as the inner cities burst into violence, a National Students Association report estimated that almost 40,000 students engaged in 221 major demonstrations at 101 colleges and universities.

In August, student dissent intensified at the National Democratic Convention in Chicago, where the ineffectiveness of the flower-power approach became evident. To protest the war in Vietnam, 10,000 young, peaceful reformers traveled to the Windy City for the opening of the convention on August 26. They were organized by David Dellinger of the National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, Tom Hayden and Rennie Davis, cofounders of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), and Jerry Rubin of the Yippies, who the year before had won 22 percent of the vote in the Berkeley mayoral race on a platform that included the legalization of marijuana. In the summer of 1968, Rubin announced that "the Democratic Party is dying. While it dies, we will celebrate the Festival of Life. Come to Chicago! We are the politics of the future." He continued: "Join us in Chicago in August for an international festival of youth, music and theater." The Yippies promised "making love in the parks . . . singing, laughing, printing newspapers, making a mock convention, and celebrating the birth of FREE AMERICA in our own time."

As hopeful student militants flooded into Chicago armed with backpacks and flowers, Chicago Mayor Richard Daley readied the city for battle. The mayor, who the previous year had recommended that looters be maimed and arsonists be killed during a race riot, heavily barricaded the Amphitheater, the site of the convention. He activated 6,000 National Guardsmen, requested and received 6,000 federal troops armed with bazookas, barbed wire, and tanks, and placed 12,000 Chicago policemen on twelve-hour shifts. After encountering stiff resistance from the organized students, Daley planned a strategy of confrontation that, according to the subsequent *Walker Report*, created a "police riot." When the Democrats left on August 29, Daley's police force had injured 198 and arrested 641 protesters. Violence at the Chicago convention and the subsequent trial of eight protest leaders, labeled by *Rolling Stone* as the "trial of the new culture," radicalized many hip students who had once believed in the power of example. "I saw the power of flowers wilt, first by gas, then when the guy next to me—a hardened street hippie out of *A Clockwork Orange*—lobbed a trash can through the windshield of a trapped squad car," remembered Abe Peck of the *Seed*, a Chicago underground paper.

Events at Columbia University and the Chicago convention changed the mood of students from a hope-filled ebullience to a dark, protective aggression. "The scene has changed," wrote Steve Dreyer in the *Austin Rag*, "as people realized that you can't build a 'community' of beautiful people in a rotten, capitalist society. And it occurred with Columbia and Chicago—with the death (and co-optation) of 'do your own thing'



Vietnam War protest, Seattle, Washington, 1970. *Permission by The Daily of The University of Washington.*

and with the beginning of the revolutionary consciousness." Steve Diamond of the Liberation News Service agreed, "Nobody wanted to know about communal living in the country, about organic food. It was 'Be in the city, in the streets fighting the man.'" In January 1969, *The Rat*, an underground newspaper in New York City, told its readers that "the revolution has come. It's time to pick up your gun."

In 1969, campus violence escalated. In May, 3,000 students at the University of California at Berkeley tried to remove a chain-link fence that university officials had erected around a grassy lot known as People's Park, which students recently had renovated. Ronald Reagan, then governor of California, calling the action "a deliberate and planned attempt at confrontation," activated 2,000 National Guardsmen, who gassed the unsuspecting students from a helicopter and with shotguns killed one onlooker,

wounded 30 protesters, and arrested 800 others. Even *Time* magazine called the reaction a "crushing repression."

More of the 7.8 million university students across the country marched in protest. In 1969, disturbances occurred at state universities in Maryland, Delaware, and Minnesota. Students faced the police in major confrontations at San Francisco State, Duke University, Queens College in New York, Dartmouth College, and even at Harvard University, the bastion of academic respectability. At the University of Wisconsin at Madison, students protested the war in Vietnam by building 435 crosses, which they planted in rows on the lawn of the main administration building. The organizer of the demonstration wanted to show that "students really are faced with death." By the end of 1969, millions of students had taken to the streets, and more than 100,000 militants had banded together in 350 chapters of the radical SDS. A few hundred joined the violent Weathermen faction of SDS, bent on destroying the "system."

The war in Vietnam became very personal for American youths with the draft. On December 1, 1969, U.S. officials held the first lottery drawing to draft men into the armed forces since World War II. No longer a distant, philosophical problem, the war became an immediate concern for young men who feared death in combat. The draft helped further mobilize students who now protested for their lives.

The Psychedelic Blues

Radicalized by a war in Vietnam, the militant American youths became interested in a hard-edged rock. Rather than the folk-based, airy, acid rock, they began to listen to the angry, slashing, piercing blues of British and American guitar heroes. Faced with police clubs and tear gas, they turned to the music of an oppressed race. "The blues are bigger now than ever—ten times bigger," John Lee Hooker noticed in late 1968. "You know why it's bigger? Because all the college kids are digging it now. Ten years back the blues was just in a certain area, it was the blues lovers only. But nowadays all the kids are digging the blues—the college kids."

Jimi Hendrix, a poor, part African American, part Cherokee from a broken home in Seattle, reflected the desperate mood of late 1960s' youth through a psychedelic blues. On the cover of his 1967 debut album *Are You Experienced?*, Hendrix and his band appeared to be quintessential flower children. Hendrix wore bright yellow hip huggers and a white vest over a red, pink, and yellow paisley shirt, which had two openings around the chest that let two red eyeballs peek out. Around his neck Hendrix sported a vibrant orange tufted scarf. Bass player Noel Redding favored a double-breasted, yellow felt sport coat with flowers emblazoned on it, and drummer Mitch Mitchell had white-and-blue-striped trousers, a yellow scarf, and a white, red, and yellow tie-dyed shirt. The group stood against a backdrop of blood-red trees.

Hendrix and the Experience also freely experimented with drugs. "I fully admit that drugs controlled our music," Noel Redding later admitted. "Whether it was true or not, we felt we had to be stoned to play properly. Good dope equaled good music." Hendrix, identifying with the drug culture of the 1960s, used titles such as the title song from his first album and "Stone Free" from his first single released in December 1966.

Despite his hippie trappings, Jimi Hendrix unleashed a gut-wrenching electric blues to become rock's greatest virtuoso. The young Hendrix had listened to Chicago blues greats such as Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, and Elmore James. After being honorably discharged as a paratrooper from the 101st Airborne Division in 1962, he and fellow paratrooper Billy Cox began to play around Nashville, backing blues acts such as Nappy Brown and Slim Harpo. For the next two years, he played with R&B performers such as Little Richard, James Brown, Jackie Wilson, and B. B. King. In 1964, Hendrix relocated to New York City, where he performed with the Isley Brothers and soul singer Curtis Knight.

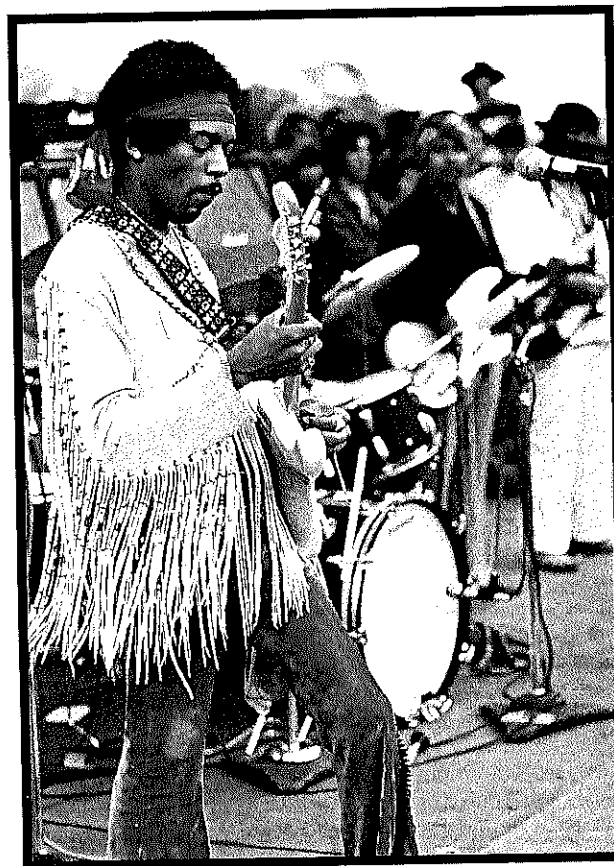
In late 1966, Hendrix formed the Experience and amazed European audiences with an act modeled after former employers such as Little Richard and James Brown. At the Paris Olympia, he twisted, rolled, shook, and writhed in perfect time to every half note of his thunderous electric blues. During the next few months, the guitarist staged similar shows for spectators at Stockholm's Tivoli, the Sports Arena in Copenhagen, and the Saville Theater in London.

Hendrix delivered a loud, angry electric blues that captured the violence of the era. Using various electronic devices such as the wah-wah pedal, the fuzz box, and feedback at almost deafening levels, the guitarist pioneered a harsh, explosive, ripping style of electric blues. Explained Hendrix about the sound: "Lots of young people now feel they're not getting a fair deal. So they revert to something loud, harsh, almost verging on violence; if they didn't go to a concert, they might be going to a riot." Contended Billy Cox, who played with the guitarist in the Band of Gypsies in 1970, "He revolutionized the blues. He took it to another level." The titles Hendrix gave to his songs reflected the desperation of the times. For his 1967 debut, he penned "Manic Depression," "I Don't Live Today," and "Purple Haze."

By 1970, Hendrix shed some of his hippie veneer and replaced it with a politicized aggression. Songs such as "Machine Gun" combined Hendrix's guitar explosions with a growing awareness of social problems. "Jimi told me that what he was trying to express in ['Machine Gun'] was that at every moment there are terrible things going on all over the world—war, destruction, and terror, and that he wanted to open people's eyes," confided Monika Danneman, Hendrix's girlfriend at the time of his death. At a 1969–1970 New Year's Eve concert at the Fillmore East, the guitarist dedicated the song "to all the soldiers who are fighting in Chicago and Milwaukee and New York, oh yes, and to all the soldiers who are fighting in Vietnam." Explained the guitarist in 1970, "That's all I'm singing about. It's today's blues."

Hendrix also exemplified the militant era through his stage show. On June 18, 1967, at the Monterey Pop Festival, where he made his debut in the United States and attracted American acclaim, he finished his set with a thrashing, tortured version of the Troggs' "Wild Thing." As the last notes of the song blasted the audience from a column of nine amplifiers and eighteen speakers, Hendrix ceremonially doused his guitar with lighter fluid and set it on fire. "The Experience's destruction is inevitable rather than accidental, the surfacing of a violent streak," commented *Newsweek*, "the spontaneous and impulsive violence of the young."

Technological advances helped Hendrix deliver his message. On the advice of guitarist Pete Townshend of the Who, electronics wiz Jim Marshall started to work on a



Jimi Hendrix playing his guitar at Woodstock, 1969. © Henry Diltz/Corbis.

more powerful amplifier to suit the needs of sixties' rock-and-rollers. He designed a huge 100-watt amp that could be stacked, allowing rock guitarists to generate a deafening roar accompanied by distortion and feedback. In 1966, Hendrix visited Marshall's shop in London and agreed to exclusively use the new mega-powered amplifiers, which he stacked on top of one another to blast his audiences. The combination of Hendrix's style and Marshall's amps created a new sound for a tumultuous time.

Eric Clapton, the lead guitarist for Cream, regularly practiced in Marshall's shop and also bought the new Marshall stacks to deliver a hard-hitting paisley blues. The members of Cream—also including Jack Bruce and Ginger Baker—had individually

started out in various blues units: Drummer Ginger Baker had joined Blues Incorporated and had powered the Graham Bond Organization; Jack Bruce had played his six-string bass with Baker in Blues Incorporated and the Graham Bond Organization, leaving to join John Mayall and Manfred Mann; and Eric Clapton, idolizing blues legend Robert Johnson, had perfected a piercing guitar sound in the Yardbirds and John Mayall's Bluesbreakers before joining Cream. In June 1966, Ginger Baker approached Clapton about forming a group that, upon the guitarist's insistence, included Jack Bruce on bass and vocals. Clapton defined the group's musical approach as "blues ancient and modern."

As with Hendrix, Cream delivered a high-volume, jazz-tinged version of the electric blues. They first released the album *Fresh Cream*, which included Muddy Waters' "Rollin' and Tumblin'," "I'm So Glad" by Skip James, and "From Four Until Late" by Robert Johnson. In late 1967, the group followed with *Disraeli Gears*, their U.S. breakthrough, which contained several blues-based originals such as their signature "Sunshine of Your Love." The next year, they followed with the number-one *Wheels of Fire*, recorded at the Fillmore West, which included the Hendrix-inspired "White Room" and the biting "Politician." After hearing the group, Rose Clapp, Clapton's grandmother who had raised him, felt that Eric had "always been a lonely boy and his music still gives me that feeling about him." Said the guitarist about his music: "Rock is like a battery that must always go back to the blues to get recharged."

Cream played their psychedelic blues at a near-deafening level. "There was, in fact, one gig where Eric and I stopped playing for two choruses," remembered Ginger Baker. "Jack didn't even know. Standing in front of his triple stack Marshalls [amplifiers], he was making so much noise he couldn't tell." After attending a May 1968 concert on the band's final tour, Ian Whitcomb wrote in the *Los Angeles Times* about the "great cataleptic hunks cut from the aged blues and pummeled out, slit up, reshaped, thoroughly examined by the violent guitars and drums."

Though delivering a hard-hitting electric blues, Cream also adopted touches of psychedelia. Despite being "pretty contemptuous of the West Coast rock-and-roll scene as exemplified by the new bands like Jefferson Airplane, Big Brother and the Holding Company and the Grateful Dead," Clapton nonetheless wore extravagant stage costumes purchased at Granny Takes a Trip in London and performed on acid. He also used a full array of guitar devices such as the distortion box and the wah-wah pedal to produce a new variant of the blues that adopted elements from the psychedelic sound.

Steve Miller offered another brand of psychedelic blues. As a youth he met T-Bone Walker, who provided him with "my basic lead phrasing." In 1961, after backing Jimmy Reed in a Dallas bar, Miller traveled from his Texas home with his friend Boz Scaggs to the University of Wisconsin in Madison, where they formed a white blues group, the Ardells. In 1964, he migrated to Chicago, where he backed blues greats Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters, and James Cotton and organized a blues band with Barry Goldberg. "Texas and then Chicago," Miller told a reporter, "where I spent some time learning Chicago blues and by the time I got to San Francisco [in 1966] I realized I had picked up a whole lot of Chicago blues."



Steve Miller Band, including Boz Scaggs (left) and Steve Miller (center), 1967. Photo by Platt Collection/Hulton Archive/Getty Images.

Traveling to San Francisco in late 1966, the guitarist formed the Steve Miller Blues Band, which combined Miller's blues experience with the surrounding sounds of acid rock. In October 1967, after appearing at the Monterey Pop Festival, the band signed with Capitol Records and released *Children of the Future*, a hybrid of blues and psychedelia complete with Victor Moscoso album art. The next year Miller neared the Top Twenty with *Sailor*, another hybrid effort, which featured the spacey "Quicksilver Girl" and the Chicago blues of the Jimmy Reed tune "You're So Fine."

Jeff Beck, another guitar hero who had been a veteran of the Yardbirds, produced a hard-edged blues. After splitting from the Yardbirds in late 1966, Beck formed his own group, which included blues shouter Rod Stewart. The guitarist, though dressed in paisley shirts and bell-bottomed, multicolored pants, reworked blues standards such as Willie Dixon's "You Shook Me" and "I Ain't Superstitious" in a tumultuous, shattering style. "We used to take things like John Lee Hooker and Muddy Waters and all the great bluesmen and play them our way," related Beck. "We wanted to mess with them a bit." He characterized his second LP, the Top-Twenty *Beck-Ola*, a 1969 collection of blues-drenched originals and rock standards such as "All Shook Up," as "heavy music."

Alvin Lee, the blues fanatic who fronted Ten Years After, produced a loud, aggressive electric blues. He first drew attention to his guitar mastery, when he backed John Lee Hooker at the Marquee Club in London. By August 1965, Lee had joined

with bass player Leo Lyons and drummer Ric Lee in the blues-oriented Jaybirds. Late the next year, the band added Chick Churchill on keyboards and changed their name to Ten Years After. In 1967, the band released their first LP that, though on the cover featuring psychedelic art and a blurred picture of the band in paisley-print shirts, delivered biting renditions of blues such as Sonny Boy Williamson's "Help Me" and Willie Dixon's "Spoonful." The group developed their blues style on Top-Twenty albums like *Ssssh* (1969) and *Cricklewood Green* (1970).

Janis Joplin, propelled to stardom amid the hippie craze, sang the blues. In 1963 she and Chet Helms, the future owner of the Avalon Ballroom, hitchhiked from her home in Port Arthur, Texas, to San Francisco where Joplin sang in various North Beach folk clubs such as the Coffee Gallery, sometimes backed by Jorma Kaukonen, who later would help start the Jefferson Airplane. Joplin returned home but drifted back to San Francisco. In June 1966, Chet Helms recruited the singer to a group that he managed, Big Brother and the Holding Company, who Janis transformed from one of the original psychedelic bands into a blues unit that showcased her razor-sharp cries of anguish. As with so many young American electric blues artists of the late 1960s, Joplin first surprised the rock-and-roll world at the Monterey Pop Festival, held in June 1967. Late next year, the Big Brother album *Cheap Thrills* topped the chart and reached the million-dollar mark in sales within a few months, and Joplin's reputation began to grow.

Within weeks of the *Cheap Thrills* success, Joplin started to shed her psychedelic backdrop. In September 1968, she dumped her one-time psychedelic band to assemble the Kosmic Blues Band, which charted with *I Got Dem Ol' Kozmic Blues Again Mama!* In May 1970, she hired the rock-blues outfit, the Full-Tilt Boogie Band, that



Jeff Beck of the Yardbirds. Courtesy of Cam Garrett/S.C.V.D. Studio.

hit the top of the chart the next year with *Pearl*. On a visit to the East Coast in August 1970, she participated in a twelve-hour antiwar rally at Shea Stadium. Two days later on August 8, Joplin traveled to the Mount Lawn cemetery in Philadelphia, where she bought a headstone for the unmarked grave of blues great Bessie Smith, probably Joplin's greatest influence. Despite the raves of journalists and her financial success, Joplin continued to feel the blues. "Someday," she confided to an interviewer, "I'm going to write a song about making love to 25,000 people in a concert and then going to my room alone."

The Motor City Five also made the transition from psychedelia to an aggressive, radicalized blues. Formed by five high school friends in Detroit in 1964, the MC5 took off in 1966 while attending Wayne State University, where they met their manager, John Sinclair. According to drummer Dennis Thompson, "Sinclair was in charge of the beatnik community then; he was the head man. Basically [vocalist Rob] Tyner, [guitarist Wayne] Kramer, and [guitarist Fred "Sonic"] Smith realized it would be a good thing to get in line with John, because John was a powerful figure in the beatnik community. This was the same time as things were happening in Frisco, and we were getting vibrations from Big Brother, the Grateful Dead, bands that were forming out there. It was like, 'Hey, let's get something happening back here'" in Detroit.

As with their counterparts in San Francisco, the MC5 lived and worked communally. They roomed together above the office of the underground newspaper the *Fifth Estate*. Believing in cooperation, the band started "trans-love energies," which guitarist Wayne Kramer described as "a communal association that provided all the services that we, as a band, needed. . . . It was like a multicultural collective with a lot of marijuana smoke and LSD thrown in." Though playing a James Brown-type, free-jazz-influenced, blues-based music, the MC5 adopted as a "three-point program" the slogan "dope, rock-'n'-roll, and fucking in the streets."

During the late 1960s, the MC5 became radicalized. According to Kramer, they expanded their three-point program "into a ten-point program that got more overtly political, like Free Economy, Free All Political Prisoners, and the rest of the agenda of the day." The MC5 Social and Athletic fan club became the White Panther Party, and the band played to the rioters at the 1968 National Democratic Convention in Chicago. By 1969, asserted manager John Sinclair, the group was "totally committed to the revolution, as the revolution is totally committed to driving people out of their separate shells and into each other's arms."

In 1969, the MC5 released their first album, *Kick Out the Jams*, which included songs such as "Motor City Is Burning." To open the album, they enlisted the services of Brother J. C. Crawford, who delivered one of the most rousing exhortations in rock history: "Brothers and sisters, I want to see a sea of hands out there, let me see a sea of hands. I want everybody to kick up some noise. I want to hear some revolution out there, brothers, I want to hear a little revolution!" The crowd, clapping when Crawford had begun, became more agitated. "Brothers and sisters, the time has come for each and every one of you to decide whether you are going to be the problem or whether you are going to be the solution," he continued, using a Black Panther slogan. "You must choose, brothers, you must choose. It takes five seconds, five seconds of decision, five seconds to realize your purpose here on the planet. It takes just five seconds to



Janis Joplin belting out the blues. *Permission by The Daily of The University of Washington.*

realize that it's time to *move*, it's time to *get down with it*. Brothers, it's time to testify, and I want to know, are you ready to testify? *Are you ready?*" screamed Crawford to a wild crowd that was jumping on the auditorium chairs. "I give you a testimonial—the MC5." The band launched into a near-deafening version of a hard-edged blues called "Rambling Rose."

The debut album included incendiary lyrics—"Kick out the jams, motherfuckers"—that led to a clamp-down on the group. "They were arresting clerks in stores for selling the record. Certain chains refused to carry our record," bitterly remembered Sinclair, who himself was jailed several times on trumped-up charges, "and our contract with Elektra lasted only six months." He described the political platform of the band as "carrying a bomb up to the front of the door of the White House and knocking on the door and handing it to 'em."

Creedence Clearwater Revival, although flirting with psychedelia, infused the blues with a similar political message. In his home near San Francisco during the Beat

era, amid the stirrings of hippiedom, bandleader John Fogerty listened to the records of Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Lightnin' Hopkins, Elvis Presley, and Carl Perkins. By 1959, he joined with his brother Tom and high school classmates Stu Cook and Doug "Cosmo" Clifford in bands called the Blue Velvets, the Golliwogs, and, finally in 1967, Creedence Clearwater Revival.

The band mixed Chicago electric blues with early rockabilly and a touch of fuzzy psychedelia into a driving concoction that Fogerty labeled "swamp music." In 1968, Creedence gained attention with a cover of Dale Hawkins's "Suzie-Q," which consciously catered to hippiedom. "It was meant to be psychedelic—to fit on underground radio," Fogerty admitted. "Actually, it was originally just a demo tape, and we took it to KMPX, the underground San Francisco FM station, and they started playing it."

Though paying homage to the nearby sound of San Francisco, Creedence emphasized stinging electric blues and rockabilly licks on their 1969 Top-Ten breakthrough album *Bayou Country*, which included Fogerty's "Proud Mary." "I pay homage to my icons. Howlin' Wolf was a big influence on me," remarked the singer-guitarist. "I unashamedly admit that I was influenced by James Burton [Ricky Nelson's guitarist], Scotty Moore [Elvis Presley's guitarist], Chet Atkins." Within eighteen months, the hard-driving rockabilly-blues band topped the album chart twice (*Green River* and *Cosmo's Factory*); placed two other LPs in the Top Five (*Willie and the Poor Boys* and *Pendulum*); and scored with Top-Five singles such as "Bad Moon Rising," "Green River," "Down on the Corner," "Travelin' Band," and "Lookin' Out My Back Door."

Besides swamp classics, which conjured up images of a mythical South, Fogerty turned to social commentary. He penned antiwar songs such as "Effigy," "Fortunate Son,"¹ and "Who'll Stop the Rain," which mirrored the sentiments of young Americans who feared being drafted and shipped to the unpopular and escalating war in Vietnam. "Some folks are born, made to wave the flag, ooh they're red, white, and blue," sang the gravelly voiced Fogerty in "Fortunate Son." "When the band plays 'Hail to the Chief' they point the cannon at you. Some folks inherit star-spangled eyes, ooh, send you off to war, and when you ask them how much should we give, the only answer's more, more. It ain't me, it ain't me, I ain't no military son. It ain't me, it ain't me, I ain't no fortunate one."

Heavy-Metal Thunder

Some rockers, reflecting the militant mood of the times, delivered a loud, explosive blues unfettered by psychedelia to produce a sound termed *heavy metal*, initially defined by Steppenwolf. The band, coalescing around German-born vocalist/guitarist John Kay (a.k.a. Krauledat), provided an amped-up, aggressive, politicized rock. In 1968, they benefited from the inclusion of two songs from their debut on the soundtrack to the cult film classic *Easy Rider*. The self-named effort neared the top of the chart and yielded an anthem for the late 1960s, "Born to Be Wild," which included the phrase "heavy-metal thunder" that characterized the band's sound. "We play fairly intense, fairly aggressive music," contended Kay, "and when I sing and spit out my lyrics, so to speak, it tends to come out in a sort of intense, and to some people, somewhat intimidating or frightening,

¹© 1969 Jondora Music, courtesy Concord Music Group, Inc.

kind of way." During the next two years, Steppenwolf amazingly placed five more albums in the Top Twenty, culminating their efforts with the antiwar statement *Monster*, which included the song "Draft Resister." In 1972, the group temporarily disbanded when Kay ran for a slot on the Los Angeles City Council.

If Steppenwolf coined a name for the new music, Led Zeppelin, led by guitarist extraordinaire Jimmy Page, became one of heavy metal's main stars. Page, a poor youth from the London working class, had played brilliant session guitar for the Rolling Stones, the Kinks, and the Who before joining the Yardbirds. After the Yardbirds disbanded in July 1968, Page enlisted the help of session bassist John Paul Jones, drummer John Bonham, and vocalist Robert Plant, who had earned the moniker "wild man of the blues from the Black Country" for his work with groups such as the Delta Blues Band and the Crawling King Snakes. The foursome toured briefly in Scandinavia as the New Yardbirds before changing their name to Led Zeppelin.

In 1968, Led Zeppelin entered the studio to record their blues-based debut. "I've never been so turned on in my life," recalled Robert Plant of the fifteen-hour recording session. "Although we were all steeped in blues and R&B, we found out in the first hour and a half that we had our own identity." On the album they unveiled a slashing, amplified blues, including Willie Dixon's "You Shook Me" and "I Can't Quit You Baby," and a reworked version of Howlin' Wolf's "How Many More Years," called "How Many More Times." By early 1969, Led Zeppelin had hit the Top Ten in Britain and the United States with the album, and later in the year, hit the top of the chart with their second effort, which featured their signature, Willie Dixon-inspired "Whole Lotta Love." The next year, the group topped the charts with *Led Zeppelin 3*, becoming the top rock act in the world.

Black Sabbath perfected the loud, aggressive blues that characterized heavy metal. Formed in 1967 as Earth, four Birmingham toughs initially churned out blues covers. "When we were Earth, we were doing lots of blues stuff, from Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters, John Lee Hooker," remembered bassist Terry "Geezer" Butler. "And a lot of the English blues band stuff, like Cream, John Mayall. Eventually [the blues covers] translated into much heavier stuff."

In early 1969, the band changed its name from Earth to Black Sabbath and pounded out a hard-driving, militant sound on its 1970 debut. "I don't profess to be a messiah of slum people," insisted vocalist John "Ozzy" Osbourne, "but I was a backstreet kid, and that little demon is still in there, shoving the hot coal in. The aggression I play is the aggression I know. And it's obviously aggression a lot of people have." The group recorded songs such as "War Pigs" and "Iron Man" on their second album *Paranoid* (1970), which embodied the intense antiwar sentiment of the era.

Prompted at least in part by Geezer Butler's fixation on religious imagery, Black Sabbath fastened on a preoccupation with demons and a hellish otherworld that had tormented many Delta bluesmen such as Robert Johnson, who had recorded "Me and the Devil Blues." The band borrowed their name from the title of a 1963 Boris Karloff movie and chose "Evil Woman," backed by "Wicked World," as their first single. They followed with songs such as "Electric Funeral," "Children of the Grave," and "Sabbath, Bloody Sabbath." "If we come across doomy and evil, it's just the way we feel," contended guitarist Tony Iommi.

Ozzy Osbourne gave a more vivid, expansive explanation for the band's gloomy theme: "Now you consider everyone's all jolly and tip-toein' around, stoned on acid, havin' Woodstock and all love, peace, sex, drugs and rock-'n'-roll, and all that's great," he told an interviewer. "But for us guys that were livin' in this *hole* in the world, it wasn't that way. And Tony [Iommi] thought 'wouldn't it be interesting to put this horror vibe to a musical thing.' And then we started to write doomy music, we used to call it. This death music. Doom music." Such "doom music" struck a chord among youth, who propelled the first six Black Sabbath albums to the British Top Ten and the Top Thirty in the United States.

Deep Purple turned to heavy metal midway through their career. Funded in 1967 by two London businessmen, the band began to chart with a series of remade pop songs such as Joe South's "Hush" and Neil Diamond's "Kentucky Woman." In September 1969, they recorded a *Concerto for Group and Orchestra* with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. After *Concerto* failed to sell in the United States, guitarist Ritchie Blackmore steered the band toward a loud, pulsating, dangerous sound on the British Top-Five effort *Deep Purple in Rock* (1970). "I always played every amp I've ever had full up, because rock-and-roll is supposed to be played loud," Blackmore explained. "I also got my amps boosted," he intimated about the music. "I know Jim Marshall personally, and he boosted them for me." The band continued to mine explosive, roaring chunks of sound on their next six efforts, including their classic *Machine Head* (1972), all of which hit the British Top Ten and the upper reaches of the American chart.

The Rebirth of the Blues

The militant, dark mood that fostered heavy metal led to a late 1960s' electric blues revival. Young, white blues performers raised in the American South began to gain popularity. Johnny Winter, raised in Beaumont, Texas, had played the blues for years before attracting national attention. After starting a number of blues-rock outfits with his brother Edgar, Winter traveled to Louisiana and then to Chicago, where he backed local blues greats. He returned to Texas, played the Georgia-Florida blues circuit, and produced a demo tape that included blues standards such as Howlin' Wolf's "Forty-Four," Sonny Boy Williamson's "Help Me," and Muddy Waters' "Rollin' and Tumblin'."

Winter began to reap the rewards of his efforts. In a 1968 *Rolling Stone* review of the Texas blues scene, the guitarist was referred to as "a 130-pound cross-eyed albino with long, fleecy hair, playing some of the gutsiest fluid blues guitar you have ever heard." A few weeks later, Winter was signed by East Coast club owner Steve Paul, who had rushed to Houston after reading the article. In 1969, Johnny Winter debuted on Columbia Records with an electric blues album that neared the Top Twenty. "I'd been put down for years for singing the blues and suddenly everyone liked me and wanted to hear me," shrugged Winter at the time.

Canned Heat, a Los Angeles blues band named after the Tommy Johnson song "Canned Heat Blues," also began to attract fans. Brought together in 1965 by singer Bob ("The Bear") Hite and guitarist Alan Wilson, Canned Heat initially had trouble finding work. "Nobody would hire us because we were blues," complained Hite, who in the 1960s rabidly collected more than 70,000 blues records. After their electric



Johnny Winter. Photo by Ebet Roberts. Permission by Alligator Records.

performance at the Monterey Pop Festival, the band began to gain recognition. In 1967, they signed with Liberty Records and hit the chart with their self-named debut, composed mostly of blues standards. The next year, the group neared the Top Ten with the Henry Thomas 1928 blues tune "Going Up the Country" and reached the Top Twenty with *Boogie with Canned Heat* and *Living the Blues*. In 1971, after three more successful, blues-drenched LPs, Canned Heat recorded an album with one of their idols, John Lee Hooker.

The Allman Brothers delivered electric blues from the Deep South. Raised in Florida, brothers Duane and Gregg Allman became young blues fanatics. Late-night radio station WLAC "would play those [blues] tunes and we'd head to the record store, man. We'd run in yelling, 'Who is this guy Lightnin' Hopkins?'" Gregg reminisced. By the time Duane graduated from high school in 1964, the duo had spearheaded blues bands up and down Daytona Beach and had recorded a commercially unsuccessful version of Willie Dixon's "Spoonful." In 1967, they moved to Los

Angeles and signed with Liberty Records as Hourglass. After two LPs, Hourglass disbanded and Duane moved to Muscle Shoals, Alabama, providing background guitar for Wilson Pickett, Aretha Franklin, and Percy Sledge.

In 1969, Duane Allman formed a new band with brother Gregg, Dickey Betts on second guitar, Berry Oakley on bass, and drummers Butch Trucks and Jaimoe Johanson. "Duane and Gregg were students of the urban blues," recalled Betts. "Their thing was like a real honest, truthful chilling delivery of that music, whereas Oakley and I may have been influenced by the blues and were students of it, but we were more innovative. We would try to take a blues tune and, instead of respecting the sacredness of it, we would go *sideways* with it." Concluded the guitarist: "So when we all came together, we gave each other a new foundation." In 1969, the Allman Brothers released their unique electric, jazz-tinged blues on a debut album, which sold well in the South. Two years later, when the band released the commercially successful *At Fillmore East*, they had become the spearhead of what critics termed *southern rock*, paving the way for mid-1970s' boogie bands such as Lynyrd Skynyrd and ZZ Top. At the turn of the decade, with bands such as the Allman Brothers, reported *Time* magazine, "the pop scene has become a roaring, pulsating paradox of sound—the white man singing the black blues."

Woodstock and the End of an Era

The intense mood of American youths, reflected by their interest in hard-edged, high-volume electric blues, changed at the turn of the decade as the militant hope of Woodstock turned into dark fear at Altamont and Kent State. The Woodstock Music and Arts Festival in Bethel, New York, held from Friday, August 15, to early Monday morning, August 18, 1969, seemed to herald a new era. Organized by John Roberts, a young millionaire who had graduated from the University of Pennsylvania; Joel Rosenman, a Yale Law School graduate and the son of a prominent Long Island orthodontist; Michael Lang, organizer of the Miami Pops Festival; and Artie Kornfeld, a seasoned songwriter and manager, the Woodstock Festival symbolized unity of purpose among the swelling ranks of youths, who opposed the war in Vietnam and hoped to assert their own power. "Woodstock signified the coming together of all tribes," remarked guitarist Carlos Santana, who played a mixture of Latin rhythms and the blues to the 400,000 mostly white educated youths who journeyed to the festival. "It became apparent that there were a lot of people who didn't want to go to Vietnam, who didn't see eye to eye with Nixon and none of that system, you know?"

The music at the festival reflected the antiauthoritarian attitude of late 1960s' youth. Though including a motley assortment of sounds from folk rockers such as Melanie to psychedelic bands such as the Grateful Dead and the Jefferson Airplane, Woodstock featured performances by Country Joe and Jimi Hendrix. Dressed in an army fatigue shirt and jeans, Country Joe McDonald took the stage at Woodstock without his band. "I get kind of mystical about my solo performance at Woodstock," remembered McDonald. "I was hanging around, and I was just filling time, singing a few country and western songs and folk songs. Then I did the [anti-Vietnam War song,] 'Feel-Like-I'm-Fixing-to-Die-Rag'—the F-U-C-K cheer—the rest is history.

From the first response to 'Give me an F,' when they all stopped talking and looked at me and yelled, F, I knew there was no turning back."

Jimi Hendrix played the final set of the festival around 9:00 A.M. on Monday. Taking the stage with a group of musicians called the Electric Sky Church, he launched into a series of heavy, ripping electric blues. Near the end of his performance, the guitar hero delivered a powerful version of "The Star Spangled Banner," which featured screaming-rockets and exploding-bomb guitar effects and sounded like a heaving, wounded monster about to die. In his rendition of the national anthem, Hendrix had captured the militant spirit of 1960s' youth who felt alienated, detached, and at the same time enraged toward their country.

The festival at Altamont Speedway near San Francisco, held on December 6, 1969, dashed the sense of power that Woodstock had engendered among many youth. Drawn by a free concert staged by the Rolling Stones, who wanted to repeat their successful Hyde Park performance, more than 300,000 fans flocked to the site. During the event, hundreds required treatment for drug overdoses, including one youth who jumped off of a freeway overpass after ingesting some LSD. Horrified, powerless spectators watched the San Francisco contingent of the Hell's Angels motorcycle gang, hired to keep order in exchange for \$500 worth of beer, stab to death an eighteen-year-old African American from Berkeley, one of four deaths at the concert. "Altamont was the end of the sixties," contended Bill Thompson, manager of the Jefferson Airplane. "It was December 1969, and that was the end. Of the whole feeling."

Events at Kent State University in May 1970 destroyed any remaining feeling of militant power that existed among 1960s' youth after Altamont. When President Richard Nixon announced that American troops had been sent into Cambodia, students at Kent State University in northeastern Ohio took to the streets. On May 2, they hurled bottles at police cars, smashed store windows, and doused trees with gasoline, setting them on fire. The next day, 1,500 protesters firebombed the one-story ROTC building on the Kent State campus.

The authorities responded swiftly and decisively to the disruptions. Mayor Leroy Satrom asked Ohio Governor James Rhodes to activate the National Guard. Rhodes, who described the students as "worse than the 'brownshirt' and Communist element . . . the worst type of people that we harbor in America," responded with 900 troops armed with M-1 rifles, submachine guns, and canisters of tear gas. On the third day of trouble, Guardsmen chased a mob of students to a knoll near Taylor Hall. Suddenly, without warning, sixteen National Guardsmen each knelt on one knee and leveled their guns at the crowd. Asserted journalism professor Charles Brill, who witnessed the action: "They all waited and they all pointed their rifles at the same time. It looked like a firing squad." The soldiers pumped thirty-five rounds from their M-1 rifles into the protesters standing 75 feet away. "It's about time we showed the bastards who's in charge," sneered one Guardsman. The gunfire killed four students and wounded ten others. "My God! My God! They're killing us," screamed one Kent State freshman.

The murders at Kent State caused an immediate reaction in colleges and universities across the nation. Students sacked the treasurer's office at the University of South Carolina; they bombed the ROTC buildings at the universities of Utah and

Idaho; and 124 students were arrested in a fight with state troopers at the University of Colorado. Protesters occupied the ROTC building at the University of Nebraska, and a half-million-dollar fire blazed at Colorado State. Three weeks of rioting ravaged the University of California at Berkeley campus, and in a riot at the University of Maryland, state troopers injured 138 and arrested 200. Students at the University of Wisconsin, chanting, "We're gonna open up a second front in Madison," took over the Army Mathematics Research Center and were responsible for at least twenty major fire bombings. More than 75,000 students marched on Washington, D.C., gathering in front of the White House, and more than 200 colleges and universities shut down for at least one day, most for the rest of the academic year. In May and June 1970, more than 508 protests rocked college campuses and drew support from two-thirds of the students.

After the initial outbursts of violence, a sense of helplessness enveloped many American youths. Said one youth at the post-Kent State demonstration in Washington, D.C.: "The people here understand that we are surrounded by fully armed troops and that if we start anything, we'd be destroyed." Recalled Cheryl McCall of the underground newspaper *South End*, "I thought that the war was just escalating, was never going to stop, that Nixon was absolutely crazed, that these people had taken over everything, that the Movement didn't have a chance. They had put up with us protesting, marching in the streets, but now they were just going to kill us." For the first time in a decade, rebellious youths who had hoped for a better world felt that they had reached a dead end.

Government actions deepened the despair of radicalized youths, making future protests seem dangerous and potentially deadly. President Richard Nixon openly called the post-Kent State demonstrators "bums . . . blowing up the campuses . . . burning up the books." Authorities refused to prosecute the National Guardsmen who killed the Kent State students, despite an F.B.I. investigation that found the shootings "not necessary and not in order . . . No Guardsmen were hurt by flying rocks or projectiles and none was in danger of his life." To further squelch student protests, in 1970 Congress passed the Omnibus Crime Act, which prescribed the death penalty for anyone convicted of a fatal bombing.

During the next few months, shocking news of the deaths of several prominent rock figures aggravated the hopeless mood of youth. Jimi Hendrix passed away on September 18, 1970, a victim of complications from an overdose of sleeping pills. On September 3, Al Wilson, lead guitarist for Canned Heat, died of a drug overdose. Only a few weeks later, on October 4, at the Landmark Hotel in Hollywood, authorities confirmed the death of Janis Joplin from an overdose of heroin. On July 3, 1971, Jim Morrison of the Doors died of a heart attack in a bathtub in Paris. By the beginning of the 1970s, many youths who only a few years earlier had vowed to work for sweeping social change listened to the guns of Kent State and retreated to the cerebral music of jazz rock, classical rock, and the soft sounds of a nonpolitical, country-tinged folk revival.