

“The Academy Award of Protest”:
Media, Cooptation, and Radical Identity in the Sixties

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

Through the 1960s and into the early 1970s, radicals in the New Left and the counterculture struggled with how to remain relevant and authentic in the face of skewed and selective mainstream media representation. They often referred to this kind of media representation of their politics and their culture as “cooptation” or “neutralization,” as mainstream society adopted the most attractive, salable aspects of dissident style, while leaving behind its most radical or threatening elements. This thesis examines how dissidents struggled with cooptation, but also how they themselves coopted “establishment” institutions for their own radical purposes. It then examines how dissident culture attempted to define radical authenticity and radical purity amongst themselves and amongst mainstream society, as they confronted the pressures of the radical lifestyle.

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“Rise up and abandon the creeping meatball!”

So urged the 1960s activists, the Yippies, referencing Jean Shepherd’s satirical article, “The Night People vs. Creeping Meatballism” in the April 1957 issue of *Mad Magazine*.¹ The Creeping Meatball was Shepherd’s satirical term for what he saw as the growing conformity of mainstream society and its tendency to create a void of political and cultural creativity. The Yippies, who were arguably the most flamboyant and media-savvy of Sixties dissidents, adopted this term as a part of their manifesto and their self-styled “religion,” claiming that it “means anything you want it to mean... A religious political movement is concerned with peoples' souls. Political demonstrations should make people dream and fantasize.”² While this term may reside somewhere between the ridiculous and the appetizing, it is ultimately representative of the deep divisions between radical and mainstream culture, as well as within political and cultural radical movements themselves, which carried through the 1960s and into the 1970s. Creeping Meatballism may not have been how the majority of Sixties radicals chose to define their critique of American society or their labeling of their imagined establishment enemy, but it is a significant term for considering how the feeling of the Sixties has been preserved in popular memory; the Yippies were really on to something—other than drugs—when they claimed that it “means anything you want it to mean.”

As a historical period, the 1960s evokes powerful images and associations in popular memory. No one can deny the swirl of psychedelic colours and fonts, the surge of youth through the streets at any given demonstration, the swell of the crowd listening to Martin Luther King Jr.

¹ Jean Shepherd, “The Night People vs. ‘Creeping Meatballism,’” *Mad Magazine*, no. 32 (April 1957); [www.madcoversite.com/missing_night.html]; accessed November 22, 2014].

² Jerry Rubin, “A Yippie Manifesto,” *Evergreen Review*, vol 13, no. 66 (May 1969), 42.

declare, "I have a dream," the blissed-out rock and roll and casual nudity of Woodstock. These images hold incredible power in the reconstruction of the decade in popular memory, and this list is by no means exhaustive of what sights, sounds, and feelings remain in the public's imagination about the Sixties. What can be denied, however, is the context of these sights, sounds, and feelings; a significant amount of the historical work on the decade has been devoted to examining how popular memory has been selectively created and edited from mainstream adoptions of radical and countercultural style. "Remembering" the Sixties and "misremembering" the Sixties indeed go hand in hand when considering the vast amount of historical work devoted to the relationship between radicalism and the problems of mainstream media representations of dissent.

The enduring, popular memory of the Sixties as a time of hippies, and of civil rights and anti-war marches, and of iconic rock and roll moments, could simply be from the lasting appeal of the most visually compelling and psychedelically tantalizing sights, sounds, and stories of the times. However, activists and historians have explored a much more critical interpretation of the creation of the historical record and its potential influence on popular memory. Cooptation, the domestication of dissent, or the neutralization of dissent were all terms used by Sixties activists and historians alike to describe how the mainstream media or policy-makers selectively incorporated radical and dissenting thought, culture, and style into the mainstream. By incorporating the most attractive elements of the *style* of dissidence into mainstream culture, such as radical or hippie fashions, radicalism could then be made less threatening to the status quo, and made safe for the public as salable commodities for the new styles of youth culture. The threat to the status quo of dissenting thoughts, such as antiwar and anti-imperialist sentiments,

were thus “neutralized” without being eliminated from the evolving culture of the times. Whether done intentionally or unintentionally, activists believed that the result was so often to remove any threat to established, status-quo, mainstream culture that these dissenting thoughts presented; “If you can’t beat ‘em, absorb ‘em,” wrote the historian Thomas Frank in *The Conquest of Cool* about establishment culture’s preoccupation with neutralizing dissent while adopting radical style.³

This historical approach of considering Sixties radicalism and culture as largely coopted and thus made safe and salable for the status quo is indeed relevant, though it was not an idea developed after the fact; Sixties radicals and cultural dissidents were acutely aware of the mainstream media tendency to intentionally construct very selective images of radicals and radical action. They were also aware of how this neutralized, edited image could define the lasting, mass-mediated popular memory of an event and a time. “The world began to adopt the Underground’s artistic expression of political disgust (but hedged on the ideas behind it); Underground culture gradually became a nation’s most definable sights and sounds,” wrote the journalist John Lahr in “The End of the Underground,” an essay appearing in the *Evergreen Review* in 1969 about the growing commodification of hip and radical culture.⁴ Lahr’s article was one of many appearing in the underground press throughout the Sixties that lamented the growing mainstreaming of radical culture and the simultaneous coopting and neutralizing of radical politics and style that seemed to inevitably come with it. Cooptation was a sort of all-purpose word used to describe this mainstreaming of dissident style and politics, either with the

³ Thomas Frank, *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 7.

⁴ John Lahr, “The End of the Underground,” *Evergreen Review*, vol 13, no. 65 (April 1969), 46.

intention of selling dissident style, or discrediting radical politics. This sort of cultural and political cooptation is given ample attention in historical works on the Sixties, whose authors attempt to make sense of how a time so rife with radical and experimental thought could be so easily distilled into hip style with none of the originally-intended radical and experimental content.

However, dissidents themselves were very conscious about the role they could play in portraying radical style and identity. They showed a strong commitment to defending it from mass media cooptation, as well as from inauthentic, uncommitted movement “poseurs.” Regardless of how dramatically dissident style—its fashions, its lingo—and radical politics may have been incorporated into the mainstream, it was nonetheless a valid part of movement culture. Dissidents in the counterculture and the New Left made very self-conscious efforts to define and protect radical style and identity in order to preserve the authenticity of dissent and the purity of radical purpose. One major issue that was divisive amongst groups and individuals in the Sixties was indeed how to remain authentic, but also how to become relevant and how, or whether, to make radicalism and activism palatable to the general public, so as to not alienate and anger everyday citizens. Would making dissent “acceptable” and “respectable” by everyday standards ultimately sacrifice its most important principles? Would it dilute the radical message, and thus the authenticity of radical action? Who decided what authentic radicalism meant? What was radical purity? How could authenticity and purity be sustained in an ever-growing, ever-expanding movement?

These questions had no definitive answer; authenticity to some often meant defining how others were *not* authentic, such as hippies, who other countercultural dissidents saw as being a

media creation. Establishing radical purity thus typically entailed challenging superficial markers of identity in others, such as their fashions, and attempting to confound mainstream culture with ever-changing group lingo. The added pressure of cooptation and the mainstreaming of radical style indeed challenged how dissidents could establish any sort of radical identity, which made the issue of defining authenticity that much more of an obstacle.

There has been great attention given to issues of cooptation and neutralization in the historical record, but these histories have often given uneven attention to how the mass media coopted and neutralized radical dissent. Such accounts often removed a sense of agency from historical actors who indeed felt a real, palpable sense of an opportunity for some kind of social and cultural revolution. Lahr's relatively simple declaration of the mainstreaming of underground culture encapsulates this difficult relationship between mass media and radicalism in the Sixties. Mass media has indeed left us with our most compelling images and assumptions of the Sixties, which is why it is so important to return a sense of agency to those whose place in the historical record is often defined by their falling victim to cooptation and neutralization. This essay ultimately seeks to return historical agency to the radicals and cultural revolutionaries of the Sixties in a history that has been so clouded by mass media cooptation and mass media portrayals by examining how the conscious and public building of radical identity presented a sort of cooptation in reverse; that is, radicals and dissenters themselves took part in cooptation and neutralization, and were not, themselves, immune from using it in a way that was detrimental to the movement.

The cultural and political movements of the Sixties, through expressing a general desire to either overthrow, "drop out" of, or fundamentally challenge establishment society, did not

reject American society. Rather, they drew on distinctively American and establishment symbols, institutions, and ideas, in order to create new, radical concepts of Americanism and patriotism. They themselves thus took part in this process of cooptation and neutralization by adopting an offensive position against mainstream culture and politics, and by very self-consciously seeking to define what true, authentic radical identity was. The subversion of mainstream, establishment institutions, and adopting cooptation for their own purposes, meant infusing these institutions, such as prison, the military, and general ideas of patriotism, with new cultural meanings that allowed for a radical reimagining of American society. However, the issue of cooptation went even further, as movement radicals unintentionally or unwittingly used it within their own movements to establish a gendered hierarchy. This thesis will argue that cooptation was thus not simply a tool or a weapon used by the mainstream media to stifle dissent or to commodify its styles. It was also a tool used by dissident movements against mainstream, establishment culture to repurpose American institutions to the radical cause. While this sort of neutralization of American institutions was a very intentional use of cooptation by radicals, there was also a more insidious, chauvinistic use of cooptation within the movement that perpetuated women's roles as radicals as secondary to men's.

While efforts at coopting mainstream society and American institutions for radical purposes may not have been as powerful or as prevalent, or as lasting in the historical record, as the cooptation of radicalism and neutralizing of dissent, its importance has been largely overlooked. To examine it in more detail allows for a more balanced understanding of the relationship between media and radicalism in the Sixties, and of how cooptation was not just a means of neutralizing dissent; when wielded by dissenters, it was also a means of adopting the

institutions that defined patriotic American culture and appropriating them for radical purposes. Cooptation and neutralization have also seldom been applied to movement literature and behaviour to examine how it was used *within* movement culture itself. It was thus not simply a top-down phenomenon of the powerful, mainstream society looking to stifle dissenters, nor was it a bottom-up grassroots phenomenon of dissenters taking the offensive against mainstream society; it was a means of rethinking the egalitarian idealism of equality in movement culture.

Before delving into these issues of cooptation, it is useful to consider how radicals in dissident movements defined their political and cultural adversaries. While “the establishment,” sometimes also written with an upper-case “E,” was often an all-purpose, umbrella term used to describe the forces of mainstream culture and politics, a number of other terms were used to point to more specific and nuanced concerns. “The military-industrial complex” was a major catch-phrase of the times, used to describe the growing omnipresence of business in the American military. Often used by radicals to criticize the military and the arms industry, *Time* magazine published an article, “What Is the Military-Industrial Complex?” to try to divert critical attention away from the military by stating that this complex “[g]oes beyond the Pentagon and large weapons manufacturers.” It included universities that received Pentagon grants, and “even extends to the stores where payrolls are spent.”⁵

This discussion of the military-industrial complex indicated the absolute and far-reaching nature of this concept, which included a nation of individuals complicit in its growth. Complicity was often an issue that radicals outlined in their definition of their perceived enemy, and “corporate liberalism” was a term that some radicals used to signify how they imagined

⁵ “What Is the Military Industrial Complex?” *Time*, vol 92, no. 11 (September 13, 1968), 23.

mainstream, liberal politics to have failed the American people.⁶ Carl Ogelsby, the president of the New Left student activist group, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) from 1965 to 1966, claimed that corporate liberalism “solicits the oppressed to accept their oppression willingly,” referring to how liberal politics offered concessions without any fundamental restructuring.⁷ And of course, there was Jean Shepherd’s idea of “Creeping Meatballism.” All of these terms had one basic thing in common: they all saw some serious, fundamental problems with mainstream American culture, politics, and society, and dissidents frequently labelled this problem as being a defining aspect of “the establishment” in the Sixties, and this term will thus be used throughout this thesis.

One other difficulty in discussing how Sixties dissidents labeled their imagined enemy is how to periodize and label “the Sixties” as an era. “The Sixties,” as a decade, are not an easily periodized, cohesive, contiguous ten years, beginning in 1960 and ending in 1969. As a term, though, “The Sixties,” signifies more of a feeling than an immediate time period. Periodizing the decade for historical purposes, then, has taken on many shapes. The “long Sixties” idea posits that “the Sixties,” as an idea or a feeling, began with post-war Civil Rights activism and lasted well into the Seventies, or even beyond.⁸ Like almost any decade, though, the preceding years inevitably and inextricably shape the following years, and the feelings and actions of that time inevitably and inextricably carry through into subsequent years. With regards to the Sixties, this

⁶ In a more broad sense, corporate liberalism referred to the infiltration of larger, corporate business interests into politics, the state, and institutions such as universities.

⁷ Staughton Lynd, “Towards A History of the New Left,” in *The New Left: A Collection of Essays*, ed. Priscilla Long (Boston: Extending Horizon Books, 1970), 9.

⁸ This idea of the “long Sixties” is influenced by an idea that the historian Jacqueline Dowd Hall discussed in her article “The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past”; Jacqueline Dowd Hall, “The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past,” *The Journal of American History*, vol 91, no. 4 (March 2005), 1233-1263.

“long Sixties” periodization is useful in the way it suggests that Sixties activism did not end in 1969 or 1970. The historian Nadya Zimmerman, for example, ultimately concluded that the counterculture ended in 1969 with the Altamont Speedway concert, at which a man was murdered while surrounding concert-goers looked on, detached and uninvolved. “Altamont was the counterculture illusion of peace and love unveiled,” she declared, offering one opinion of periodization for the Sixties.⁹

There is certainly no doubt that Altamont was a major departure from the “peace and love” ethos of the Woodstock Festival earlier that year. However, the counterculture did not *end* in 1969, nor did the ideals of “peace and love.” This essay will examine how those ideals were very much challenged by the end of the 1960s, but that movement radicals adapted them to be more culturally and socially applicable to changing times. “The Sixties,” in this essay, will thus refer more to a “long Sixties” idea, with a bigger focus on the later, more militant years of the 1960s. As Abbie Hoffman argued in 1968, “the Sixties began in 1960, not 1968, it included electoral politics, it included door-to-door organizing, grassroots canvassing...”¹⁰ The more militant years of the later 1960s indeed had crucial roots in these earlier experiences of the Sixties, as well as the earlier challenges of the Fifties, with its infamous McCarthyism and sedition trials. The more militant years of the later 1960s and early 1970s were indeed a product of changing times, not of being a completely separate experience. In his 1968 article, “Requiem for Nonviolence,” Eldridge Cleaver claimed that Martin Luther King Jr.’s assassination “[k]illed

⁹ Nadya Zimmerman, *Counterculture Kaleidoscope: Musical and Cultural Perspectives on Late Sixties San Francisco* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008), 163.

¹⁰ Abbie Hoffman in “Yippie vs. Yuppie,” online video (1986), 0:21:00 [http://ubu.com/film/hoffman_yippie.html]; Accessed April 30, 2015]

a period of history, killed hope, killed a dream,” arguing that it was time to abandon nonviolence in the civil rights movement.¹¹ This essay focuses on “The Sixties” as a progression of radical feeling and thought, which, to many, indeed had a moment in the late Sixties where a “period of history” was closed or its trajectory altered. To some, it was the degeneration of the hippie community of the Haight-Ashbury in 1967. To others it was the Democratic National Convention in 1968. Still to others, such as liberal and radical women’s rights activists, there was no defining moment, but a growth of disillusionment well into the Seventies and beyond. “The Sixties” in this essay, then, has no decisively set timeline, but deals roughly with the idea of a “long sixties.”

Drawing largely on writings from the New Left, the counterculture, and the GI antiwar movement, this essay examines key ideas that have both permeated the dissident movements of the Sixties and that have influenced historical discussions about these movements. Though the focus of this essay will be primarily on the predominantly white New Left and counterculture and the more prominent male activists, racial histories and histories of the women's movements will indeed be touched upon. These histories were so important to this time, especially in the way civil rights activism provided a sort of training ground for white political activist groups and in the way the women's movement carried a lot of this activism into the 1970s and broke down its most ironically chauvinistic aspects; these histories are inseparable from any discussion of media and radicalism in the Sixties.

To begin, though, the divisions between understandings of culture and politics must be examined, because of the ways in which these divisions initially drew a prominent line between "lifestyle" and "political" activists in the Sixties—to generalize, between the hippies and the New

¹¹ Eldridge Cleaver, “Requiem For Nonviolence,” *Ramparts*, vol 6, nos. 9 & 10 (May 1968), 48.

Left. This generalization figures so heavily in popular memory as well as in the early years of social activism in the Sixties; it is thus intriguing to consider how expressions of culture and expressions of politics really were not so separate in radical activism and identity by the end of the Sixties. To continue to break down this division in academic analyses of the period allows for a more holistic understanding of the movements as part of a bigger experiment in alternative living. It removes the necessity for trying to evaluate their long-term effectiveness in "changing" the system and focuses rather on the importance of the experience, for experience, or "the moment," could not be coopted.

Culture vs Politics: Differing Notions of Dissent

John Lahr's statement about the mainstreaming of underground culture highlights the necessity of removing divisions between the definitions of culture and politics in order to better understand Sixties radicalism and to return a sense of agency to those whose stories have been overshadowed by cooptation. It is the bell-bottom-wearing, grass-smoking, peace-sign-wearing, long-haired love freaks of the Haight-Ashbury and the counterculture that represent the culture of the Sixties in popular memory, whereas it is the more geographically amorphous conglomeration of the war-protesting, draft-card-burning, soapbox-shouting, university-occupying activists of the New Left that represent the politics of the Sixties in popular memory. These two groups—the counterculture and the New Left—have often been divided in academic accounts, as well as divided amongst themselves, based on differing levels of culture or political engagement. In essence, this split was based on assumptions that being a cultural dissident, such as a hippie, was a form of passive disengagement, whereas being a political radical, such as an SDS activist, was a form of active engagement.

This division is seemingly an easy and a practical one for people in Sixties movements to make of each other, as well as for historians to make of the different characters and groups they encounter. However, as the journalist Jack Newfield wrote in an article in *Evergreen Review* in 1968 about the political radicalism of Tom Hayden and the cultural dissidence of Bob Dylan, these two men “personalize the two most important moods and movements of the generation still under 30... the politics of resistance, and the art of the absurd.” He argued that they were “linked by the common outrage against what is but divided by contradictory visions of how to forge what

might be.”¹² Throughout the decade, there was a prominent breakdown of these divisions that activists and cultural dissidents imagined amongst themselves, and this breakdown was most explicitly evident in the New Left, as they struggled with how to maintain the radical lifestyle amidst the fracturing of New Left organizations.

This division between the counterculture and the New Left—between understandings of culture and politics—should be and is gradually being removed in historical considerations of the decade because of the way in which it limits a more comprehensive yet nuanced understanding of what it really meant to be radical or dissident in a time of such great media cooptation.

Bradford D. Martin addresses this point in detail in his book *The Theatre is In The Street*, which looks at guerrilla theatre in the 1960s. He explicitly rejects what he identified as the earliest histories of the Sixties “which tended to treat culture and politics as separate categories.”

Treating them as separate categories, he argued, legitimated political activism as seeking change in explicitly legislative ways, while portraying the counterculture as a “sideshow separate from politics.” He went on to identify the merging of understandings of culture and politics in later historical discussions, and he posited that “culture can become a sort of pre-political form.”¹³

Referring to culture as a “pre-political” form refers to the necessity of wider cultural attitudes to lay the groundwork for more legislatively political action. Antiwar protests, for example, could not hope to become effective against the war when more mainstream cultural attitudes considered antiwar sentiments to be anti-American, or pro-Communist, and when mainstream news coverage focused more on protestors’ “unsavoury” appearance and long hair than their

¹² Jack Newfield, “Hayden-Marat Dylan-Sade: Defining A Generation,” *Evergreen Review*, vol 12, no. 52 (March 1968), 23.

¹³ Bradford D. Martin, *The Theatre Is In the Street: Politics and Performance in Sixties America* (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004), 16, 19.

actual arguments. In short, there was not fertile cultural ground for the embracing of politics that were critical of the status quo. The term “pre-political” is indeed applicable in this way, though it implies the necessity of culture coming before politics. This is ultimately a limiting way to consider this relationship, which is not linear; culture and politics were complicatedly intertwined, and the crossover caused a great deal of tension within different movements who saw others' approaches as either too aggressively active and exclusively intellectual, or too quietly passive and too akin to “dropping out.”

Writings from and about the New Left and the counterculture show these two groups pitted against each other in the Sixties, which is not surprising to some who are familiar with their different ideologies. It may be surprising to others, however, who emphasize similarities between these groups because of their close connection in popular memory because they were both such large parts of dissident culture. As Jack Newfield stated, these two groups did greatly differ in their “visions of how to forge what might be,” but the mainstream press was not so careful to distinguish this difference. Robert Jones wrote about the “now generation” of Sixties youth in very general terms in a *Time* magazine article from January 1967 about the “Man of the Year,” titled “The Inheritor.” For the sake of argument, to generalize and consider the youth of the Sixties as one cohesive generational group can recreate the wider public mindset about youth culture and perhaps shed some light on the significance of the generalized statements this article makes. “The Inheritor” referred to a generation of youth (referred to as “he” throughout the article) that has been “reared in a prolonged period of world peace” and who thus “has a unique sense of control over his own destiny.”¹⁴ It situated this generation's activism as being born in the

¹⁴ Robert Jones, “Man Of the Year: The Inheritor,” *Time*, vol 89, no. 1 (January 6, 1967), 18.

civil rights movement, which much of the New Left credited as an important training ground for New Left politics.

However, the article also traced this generation's activist evolution from this relatively respectable activist issue of early civil rights efforts to their activism being simply finished; he claimed that the Inheritor, recognizing that activism was “no longer vital” in the civil rights revolution (presumably because of the perceived success and completion offered by the 1964 and 1965 civil rights legislation), moved on from youthful experiments in activism to what he identified as a more true, lasting aspect of the generation's identity: military duty. Military duty, he claimed, was in their plans along with college, choice of vocation, marriage, and so on; agitating for change was not their true life’s purpose. Claiming that civil rights activism was “finished” because of the Civil Rights legislation is a whole separate issue, but according to Jones, the generation's politics were “solved,” and the only remaining aspects of this activism, for white youth especially and for the people who did not fall into line on their true path to military duty, were self-indulgence in idealistic affluence and the "oblivion" of drugs.¹⁵ In this article, which is largely representative of many other articles in this widely-read news weekly, politics was considered so separated from any sort of culture of lasting involvement in social issues. This problem of not discussing lifestyle choices as political helped to create a myth of youth culture as one big exercise in the self-indulgence of immediate gratification, as he stressed the generation's fixation with entitlement—symbolized by the “inheritor”—and wanting it NOW!

¹⁵ Jones, “Man Of the Year,” 22.

This connection of immediacy with self-indulgence does speak to the general affluence of this generation, and it does highlight some of the problems the New Left had with the counterculture. Warren Hinckle, the editor of *Ramparts* magazine was not necessarily unsympathetic to the hippie movement, noting that “despite the Alice in Wonderland phraseology hippies usually breathlessly employed to describe [the psychedelic community], it necessarily embodies a radical political philosophy.”¹⁶ He argued that they were radical and political explicitly because of their lifestyle choices and their place in the alternative, psychedelic community. However, he went on to criticize the “hip consumerism”¹⁷ and brand name consciousness that so often accompanied these lifestyle choices, and more seriously criticized their tendency towards political quietism: “The crisis of the happy hippie ethic is precisely this: It is all right to turn on, but it's not enough to drop out,” he wrote, referencing the catch phrase of “Tune in, turn on, drop out.”¹⁸ These criticisms of hippie quietism and “non-political” self-indulgence embodied the harshest denunciations of the counterculture by the New Left. To return to this notion of immediacy, though, the hippie movement could certainly be seen as seeking immediate gratification, because of its ideas of free love and drug use. However, the New Left's politics and vision of their place in history held a similar immediacy, as well as a sense of being a generational inheritor.

Growing Up Absurd by Paul Goodman was widely considered amongst the New Left to be a foundational document. His ideas figured heavily in writings from the underground press,

¹⁶ Warren Hinckle, “The Social History of the Hippies,” *Ramparts*, vol 5, no. 9 (March 1967), 9 [www.unz.org/Public/Ramparts-1967mar00005; Accessed October 15, 2014].

¹⁷ The historian Thomas Frank used this term in his book *The Conquest Of Cool* to signify how the counterculture and dissident, alternative culture - “hip culture” - accelerated consumer culture and perpetuated the American capitalism to which it so often claimed to be opposed. “What happened in the sixties is hip became central to the way American capitalism understood and explained itself to the public.”

¹⁸ Hinckle, “The Social History of the Hippies,” 26.

from discussions of disillusionment with ideas of success, about a socially learned indifference to the social function of dissent, and with direct references to “a generation that has grown up absurd.” Towards the end of his book, published in 1960, Goodman stated that “It is the argument of this book that the accumulation of the missed and compromised revolutions of modern times, with their consequent ambiguities and social imbalances, has fallen, and must fall, most heavily on the young...”¹⁹ A letter to the editor in *Ramparts* from September 1965 carried this idea into a generational analysis of civil rights activism. Harold B. Light wrote to the magazine about his struggles with his son's decision to work with the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) instead of pursuing a lucrative job offer. “Why is this your battle, son?” he asked. He answered his own question by the end of the letter, saying that he thanked *Ramparts* magazine “for a valuable contribution to understanding, and hope that more people will support these young workers. After all, are they not tackling the job that our generation has so UNSuccessfully [*sic*] avoided?”²⁰

While Jones in *Time* magazine saw “The Inheritor” as an affluent youthful bystander in the hip culture of the times, others, including those who subscribed to the ideas of Paul Goodman, saw these youth as inheritors of missed revolutions. Goodman argued that the higher standard to which each generation aspired “is ceasing to be one of money and status and is becoming a standard of the worth of life.”²¹ This statement summed up the very basic and fundamental idealism and ideology of both the New Left and the counterculture. Missed revolutions, or “the job that our generation has so UNSuccessfully avoided” spoke to this

¹⁹ Paul Goodman, *Growing Up Absurd: Problems of Youth In the Organized System* (New York: Random House, 1960), 216.

²⁰ Harold B. Light, “Letter To the Editor,” *Ramparts*, vol 4, no. 5 (September 1965), 9.

²¹ Goodman, *Growing Up Absurd*, xv.

generational immediacy of engaging with issues of human worth over money and status. When read together, these documents ultimately place an implicit value on the experience of activism and the participation in a culture and a politics that, though relatively affluent, had lost an immediate human, emotional element. Though consumer culture was rampant in the Sixties, the sense of immediacy that Jones noted about “The Inheritor” generation had much less to do with immediate gratification and much more to do with the immediacy of experience of those involved in radical and dissident movements.

To take part in an experience and to create one's own experience of an event was an idea that figured largely in writings and actions from Sixties dissidents, such as actively participating in guerrilla street theatre, or being physically present at Woodstock in 1969. This idea of “participatory democracy” or “the democracy of the streets” were terms used by dissidents in the Sixties to emphasize the importance of active engagement in politics and culture beyond simply voting for politicians. One major focus of participatory democracy in the SDS, for example, was to deemphasize central leadership in favour of creating a more egalitarian, actively-engaged membership base. The idea could also be more abstract; the historian George Lipsitz discussed it as a means to understand the significance of rock and roll on youth culture in the Sixties. Listening to music cannot be easily be quantified or articulated, he argued, but the transient experience of listening and feeling was a formative part of something that could not be conveyed through words or the news or politics.²² The Youth International Party, or the Yippies, headed most prominently by Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin, was perhaps the most obvious example of this idea of a message and an experience that could only truly understood through direct

²² George Lipsitz, “Who’ll Stop the Rain?” in *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, ed. David Farber (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 207.

participation. This idea was a major founding principle of the Yippies, who were known for their street antics and entertainment hijinks—most famously, nominating a pig for president at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago in 1968, and Jerry Rubin attending a House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) trial in a Revolutionary War uniform.

The Yippies claimed they were “a commercial for the revolution” and Hoffman, in his book *Revolution for the Hell of It*, written in 1968, maintained that the essence of “revolution for the hell of it” was to “make fun subversive,” though “it would take more than some neat pranks to radically change society.”²³ They sought a more cultural approach to revolutionary change, encouraging anyone and everyone to take to the streets with the explicit intention of becoming a media spectacle. They had a keen awareness of the importance of television and visual media in the culture of the Sixties, and though they also had a keen awareness of the mass media tendency to neutralize dissent and to co-opt radical style, their intention was to themselves co-opt establishment television media and subvert it for their own purposes. “I never understand the radical who comes on TV in a suit and tie,” Jerry Rubin wrote in his book *Do It!* “Turn off the sound and he could be a lawyer! The words may be radical but television is a non-verbal instrument,” he continued, encouraging a very television-media-specific thinking about how to tap into the visual culture of the times. “Every guerrilla must know how to use the terrain of the culture that he is trying to destroy,” he concluded, pointing to how dissidents could use establishment media entertainment as a more effective and subversive means of communication than the verbal rhetoric of New Left politics.²⁴ For one of his numerous summons to the HUAC, Rubin appeared dressed as Santa Claus. What would a child think if he or she turned on the

²³ Abbie Hoffman, *Revolution For the Hell Of It* (New York: Pocket Books, 1970), 5.

²⁴ Jerry Rubin, *Do It! Scenarios Of the Revolution* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1970), 108.

television and saw Santa Claus appearing before the HUAC? This costume was “a direct attempt to reach the head of every child in the country.”²⁵ So while this notion of manipulating television media images was not traditionally political, in that it did not make claims towards legislative change or did not explicitly state some sort of program, it took a political position in the way it underhandedly challenged establishment media tools and institutions while stating the necessity for active participation in the culture of dissidence.

Whereas the Yippies revelled in the revolutionary possibilities of coopting establishment media tools, New Left ideas of revolution were considerably more focused on more intellectual and program-based change. They were wary of Yippie tactics and what they saw as their self-indulgence in establishment media and street antics that were alienating to the movement and every-day citizens. From their inception in 1962, the Students for a Democratic Society, one of the most prominent New Left organizations, stated in their founding document, The Port Huron Statement, that “Any New Left in America must be, in large measure, a left with real intellectual skills,” and must take “action informed by reason... A New Left must transform modern complexities into issues that can be understood and felt up close by every human being,” it continued, again speaking to the idea of individual engagement and first-hand experience in social issues and dissident action.²⁶ There was an obvious focus in this document on the perceived necessity for the New Left to be a rational, politically-oriented, organizational body that would “start controversy across the land if national policies and national apathy are to be reversed,” naming universities as the ideal place for this kind of action.²⁷ However, the focus on

²⁵ Rubin, “A Yippie Manifesto,” 91.

²⁶ Students for a Democratic Society, “The Port Huron Statement,” in *‘Takin’ It To the Streets’: A Sixties Reader*, ed. Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 60.

²⁷ Students for a Democratic Society, “The Port Huron Statement,” 60.

the university being the place for causing controversy and their focus on intellectualism solidly placed SDS and its ideas of the New Left in a more traditionally political realm of dissent that held a certain exclusivity in its ideas of social and individual change. The SDS and New Left idea of change and activism appeared to be explicitly different and almost self-consciously oppositional to more cultural forms of change and activism, such that the the Beats in the Fifties embodied, and the hippies and the Diggers came to embody later in the Sixties.

While this rhetoric of change firmly placed the New Left in the realm of politics and implicitly denounced a more cultural withdrawal from mainstream society, their experiences with mass media cooptation linked them much more closely and explicitly with cultural dissidents. In Tom Hayden's essay "The Politics Of 'The Movement,'" he reiterated an important point in many of the social movements of the Sixties that having one single leader should be avoided in order to create a more democratic organization, but also to keep the organization's values as authentic and uncorrupted by outside pressure as possible. He stressed the need "to foster in everyone the sense of decision-making power that will keep ideas and the movement from being coopted or managed by the Establishment."²⁸ Though Hayden's focus in this document was on community organizing and the rejection of liberal politics, this direct reference to a form of participatory democracy and direct experience as an antidote to cooptation and neutralization linked New Left politics and cultural dissidence much more closely than their "contradictory visions of how to forge what might be" suggested. There was certainly no doubt that these contradictory visions were real and often pitted dissident groups and individuals against one another, but it is relevant to consider where these visions met and overlapped because of how closely linked they have

²⁸ Tom Hayden, "The Politics Of 'The Movement,'" in *'Takin' It To the Streets': A Sixties Reader*, ed. Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 75.

become in popular memory; while they sometimes fiercely defended their different visions, divisions between cultural and political dissidence were not a popularly-made distinction in mainstream media accounts of these movements.

This approach of evaluating the ideological meeting-ground of divided dissident groups reveals how prominently and inescapably the problem of media cooptation figured in their struggles. Evaluating actions and discussions of resisting cooptation and of cooptation in reverse is thus a relevant means of drawing these groups together and examining how difficult it was and is to write an “accurate” history of movements that valued the immediacy and authenticity of firsthand experience as the only true safeguard against cooptation. Though experience and “participatory democracy” are somewhat transient concepts, they are ideas that figured largely in the immediacy of the New Left. In The Port Huron Statement, the group acknowledged “the outstanding paradox” of forging an activist credo: “We ourselves are imbued with urgency, yet the message of our society is that there is no viable alternative to the present.”²⁹ This “urgency” was indicative of a politically-active version of Robert Jones's concept of this “Now generation” that felt as though society was on a dangerous precipice of the growing “press of complexity upon the emptiness of life,” and that “at any moment things might be thrust out of control.”³⁰

However, subsequent writings from a New Left contained a curious immediacy not just about seizing an opportunity for social change, but about creating their own written historical record based as closely as possible on the experience of an event. Staughton Lynd, a prominent New Left activist, wrote in the introduction to *The New Left: A Collection of Essays*, published in 1969, that “the history of the movement must be the collective product of the movement itself,”

²⁹ Students for a Democratic Society, “The Port Huron Statement,” 51.

³⁰ Students for a Democratic Society, “The Port Huron Statement,” 51.

but most importantly, that “Active participation creates historical accuracy.” Writing explicitly about the white New Left, he referred to this kind of active self-writing of the movement's history as “guerrilla history.” This concept of an alternative, individual form of history foregrounded the importance of active engagement and experience for the sake of posterity, for these dissidents imagined the history of their movement to be threatened by media and historical reinterpretation.³¹

This idea of creating historical accuracy in a written book was not ultimately an idea that resounded in New Left literature about how to “bridge the gap to the outsider.”³² Lynd stated the necessity for making New Left politics more accessible to the general public as well as for creating an accurate historical record, but he expressed serious misgivings about what format this kind of accessible record could take. The debate amongst dissidents about how to make New Left politics seem relevant and accurately represented to every-day citizens was one of the most explicit examples of the tension between cultural and political activism. In this same volume, *The New Left: A Collection of Essays*, Richard Rothstein, a former SDS member, wrote that “anti-racist, anti-imperialist, even socialist consciousness has become the cultural definition of the country's most important intellectual communities,” but that these communities showed no signs that they were “about to transform themselves from a subculture to a revolutionary movement.” He argued that they had written too many books, rather than creating lasting projects or organizations. “We are a cultural phenomenon, not a political threat,” he declared, in a powerful statement about the inaccessibility of the intellectual New Left community to the

³¹ Lynd, “Towards A History Of the New Left,” 1.

³² Lynd, “Towards A History Of the New Left,” 1.

wider public.³³ This sentiment was echoed in the concluding essay in this collection, “Notes Towards a Radical Culture” by Louis Kampf. Discussing the stifling prominence of the economic system in defining social needs and values, such as Goodman identified in *Growing Up Absurd*, he noted that the movement needed a cultural revolution “to break through this circle of economic motivation.” This cultural revolution would “help individuals to define both themselves and their relation to society... The movement must become a culture; a way of life,” he urged, foregrounding the necessity for self-examination. Politics needed a cultural foundation, not just political or social ideas, these essays urged. In an essay by a Yippie activist, written under the pseudonym of George Metefsky, he similarly wondered about how culture needed politics, and vice versa; “There is still confusion about the need for a politics to protect and extend the cultural revolution,” he wrote, lamenting the growing tendency towards apoliticism in the cultural activism of the Yippies.³⁴ Though Murray Bookchin, a prominent anarchist writer, claimed that the biggest impediment to youth culture was the “neanderthal left”—which was his way of referring to culturally outdated political theorists—who focused too heavily on bookish organization, this whole debate foregrounded the preoccupation with how to be culturally relevant in order to become a political threat beyond the *writing* of radicalism and beyond the perceived apoliticism of cultural dissent.³⁵

To consider culture as “pre politics” and politics as a vehicle for culture suggests an inclusive way of evaluating the relationship between “passive” experiments in living and

³³ Richard Rothstein, “Evolution Of the ERAP Organizers,” in *The New Left: A Collection of Essays*, ed. Priscilla Long (Boston: Extending Horizon Books, 1970), 272.

³⁴ George Metefsky, “Right On, Culture Freaks!” in *Hip Culture: 6 Essays on its Revolutionary Potential: Yippie, Third World, Feminist, Marxist, High School Student, Anarchist* (New York: Times Change Press, 1970), 13.

³⁵ Murray Bookchin, “The Youth Culture: An Anarcho-Communist View,” in *Hip Culture: 6 Essays on its Revolutionary Potential: Yippie, Third World, Feminist, Marxist, High School Student, Anarchist* (New York: Times Change Press, 1970), 61.

“active” participation in more traditionally legislative means of political change. There is no linear relationship between ideas of culture influencing politics, or of politics influencing culture. Once more, there is a necessity to look beyond the ways in which these movements were divided by understandings and self-definitions of the values of cultural and political activism. What this relationship ultimately came down to was valuing culture and politics differently, which was a value system that changed and broke down as the decade wore on. These two ideas came together as a more holistic means of protecting the authenticity of experience in the face of cooptation.

Cooptation: Representations of Dissent

Cultural cooptation and the domestication of dissent are such prominent areas of inquiry into the dissident movements of the Sixties, which struggled with how to recreate and evaluate the radical experience of the times. Ranging from early contributions such as the historian Theodore Roszack's *The Making of a Counter Culture* in 1969 to former SDS activist Todd Gitlin's *The Whole World is Watching* in 1980 to the historian Edward Morgan's *What Really Happened to the 1960s* in 2010, these works discuss how the historic image of dissent in the Sixties has been so confounded by warped media representations that the historical record itself cannot adequately furnish any answers as to how to run an oppositional movement. "Much of what passes for history in conventional thinking is actually the public memory preserved for us by the mass media," Morgan claimed, arguing that "the sixties has been so thoroughly reconstructed in mass media discourse" that the decade's surge of democratic activism has been distorted and made politically irrelevant.³⁶ These comments about the nature of the historical record of the Sixties have echoed through the decades. However, to continue to look at cooptation, considering how much attention it has been given by scholars, is to delve deeper into tracing how it was not just as an external force wrought by the establishment media. It was also a significant challenge from within dissident movements against the establishment; dissidents themselves challenged the establishment with their own forms of cooptation, as they sought to repurpose American institutions, such as the military and ideas of patriotism, for their own

³⁶ Edward Morgan, *What Really Happened to the 1960s: How Mass Media Culture Failed American Democracy* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2010) 6-7.

dissident goals. Establishment cooptation was nonetheless a serious threat to dissident movements. Before considering how these movements wielded cooptation as a weapon against the establishment, though, it is useful to understand how heavy the mass-media presence was in Sixties culture and politics and how Sixties activists and historians have viewed that presence.

Theodore Roszack's *The Making of a Counterculture* is perhaps one of the earliest formative historical reflections of Sixties cultural and political dissidence. Published in 1969, Roszack is credited with establishing the term "the counterculture" in academic discourse about the decade; while its publication date suggests that it is a primary document, it is also a formative part of the body of academic historical analyses that looks at the deep-rooted methods of establishment media cooptation. Aside from defining youth as a unique oppositional force—a counterculture—and naming the technocracy³⁷ as a particularly pernicious opponent to oppositional culture, he paid close attention to how mass media and consumer culture had created "a kind of cynical smothering of dissent by saturation coverage" of the movement. "The only way anybody or anything stays underground these days is by trying outlandishly hard," Roszack reflected, defining "saturation coverage" as an inevitable consequence of dissent being such popular "hot copy" that stories about it figuratively saturated media and society. Whether reports by "CNSNBCABC," [*sic*] *Time*, or "well-intentioned sociologists.... curious tourists, and weekend fellow-travellers," dissidents "have done a miserably bad job of dealing with distortive

³⁷ Theodore Roszack, *The Making of a Counter Culture: Reflections on the Technocratic Society and its Youthful Opposition* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1969), 5-12; The "technocracy" was the term that Theodore Roszack used to define the "new enemy" of status-quo society in the Sixties. He defined it as an "unobtrusively pervasive" nebulous force that perniciously created a society of so-called experts to whom non-experts would defer. He argued that its presence in status-quo society had created a "subliminally totalitarian" population of socially-engineered people who would not question or resist the status-quo;

publicity with which the mass media have burdened their embryonic experiments.”³⁸ It is not difficult to find examples of this “distortive publicity”; *Time* magazine, in its coverage of “the radicals” who seized a Harvard building in 1969, referred to them simply as “the radicals” throughout the piece and emphasized their supposed irrationality and long hair without mention of their motivations—though it did note that “seizing a building is simply not the Harvard way.”³⁹ This burden of trying to accurately convey one’s message and politics that Roszack identified was a significant preoccupation within dissident movements, and he suggested that this sort of saturation coverage, because of its omnipresence and its tendency to distort, was a far more formidable establishment opponent than outright repression.

Roszack’s theories about the authenticity of radical action while under the constant watch of the mass media have been carried through subsequent decades by activists and historians, or both, such as Todd Gitlin, a former member of SDS. SDS members had debated amongst themselves how to authentically act and “create its own infrastructure” in what Gitlin has called a “floodlit society”; in a floodlit society, “meaning becomes mediated,” and it “converts leadership into celebrity.”⁴⁰ This “floodlit society” expands on Roszack’s “saturation coverage”; it offers a visual cue—literally, of the overexposure of a floodlight—for how actions, rhetoric, lifestyle, experience, and so on were overly scrutinized in the media. This type of scrutiny, he argued, put oppositional or “underground” movements on the defensive. To suggest that

³⁸ Roszack, *The Making of a Counterculture*, 37.

³⁹ “Harvard and Beyond: The University Under Siege,” *Time*, vol 93, no. 16 (April 18, 1969), 48; This statement implies that seizing a building was, perhaps, the Columbia way, and thus not “the Harvard way,” considering the Columbia occupation by “the radicals” the previous year.

⁴⁰ Todd Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 3.

“meaning becomes mediated” in a floodlit society gets at the inevitable essence of media coverage of any event by any source, whether mainstream or underground; any event that is filmed, documented, or reproduced will be subject to reinterpretation. However, the suggestion that “media oversaturation” in a “floodlit society” made establishment media coverage of dissident movements a weapon rather than a basic tool for entertainment or education is a major historiographical point in histories of media in the Sixties. It is one of the most important threads that runs through discussions of media cooptation, which often refer to how the mainstream media reinforced a sort of hegemonic establishment authority in society.

“Hegemony” is an almost catch-word in historical accounts of the Sixties that take a somewhat hardline approach to media cooptation; these two concepts, of hegemony and cooptation, come together in what historians like Gitlin, Morgan, David Farber, Melvin Small, and the pop-culture media historian Aniko Bodroghkozy, discuss as the “domestication of dissent” or “ideological domestication.” These ideas of domestication refer to the incorporation, or adoption, of criticism and radicalism into more mainstream forms, thus neutralizing the radical threat to the status quo. For example, Gitlin argued that SDS was “unable to control their image,” in the mainstream media, and they thus became “outdistanced from their political reality.”⁴¹ This sense of political reality is exactly what activists like Staughton Lynd were concerned about when they stressed the immediacy of creating a “guerrilla history” of the movement; this sort of history is not necessarily the one that has persisted in popular memory and popular culture, and the historical discussion around the authenticity and efficacy of radical organizing has stressed the hegemony of mainstream media cooptation as the culprit for a

⁴¹ Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching*, 78.

warped historical record. This historical discussion, then, implicitly foregrounds the difficulty and the importance of participatory democracy and “the experience”; the historical record itself was in danger of being corrupted by mass media cooptation and the hegemonic media elite.

Though not all histories of media in the Sixties have taken this hardline, theoretical approach to cooptation and the historical record, this brief review of this historiographical discussion offers an important context for reconsidering how cooptation was not just a top-down, hegemonic relationship of the powerful imposing upon the powerless; the idea of “cooptation in reverse” is a crucial part of this power relationship, as it encourages a more empowered reading of dissident movements’ relationship with the media. The establishment was not necessarily “powerful,” nor were dissident movements “powerless,” as the notion of cooptation may suggest. Michael Kramer’s *The Republic of Rock* offers some examples of how the counterculture used establishment imagery, such as the image of Uncle Sam, for their own purposes; “Uncle Sam wants YOU for the acid tests!” read a sign advertising the Merry Pranksters’ LSD gatherings and experiments.⁴² These examples all suggest this notion of “cooptation in reverse,” or repurposing establishment tools for dissident purposes. Kramer’s book ultimately offers a compelling trajectory for further discussion of cooptation that returns a sense of agency to the counterculture and to dissident movements. By adopting and repurposing a number of major establishment institutions, dissident movements not only resisted cooptation attempts, but waged their own form of cooptation and neutralization against the establishment

⁴² Michael Kramer, *Republic of Rock: Music and Citizenship in the Sixties Counterculture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 43.

and the status quo, using the very institutions of patriotism and punishment that the establishment used against them.

Two of these major institutions that the establishment used against dissidents, and that dissidents adopted and repurposed, were the criminal justice system, and patriotism. “Patriotism” as a term does not automatically connote “the establishment,” though the rhetoric surrounding ideas of patriotism had become almost inextricably linked in public discourse with support for the government and loyalty to the nation’s endeavours. To oppose the Vietnam War or to refuse military duty, for example, was unpatriotic, even un-American;⁴³ “The rhetoric of today's young radicals is often as outrageously critical of American society as the latest communique from Peking,” commented a columnist in *Time* magazine, in an article discussing “The Radical Voice.”⁴⁴ Dissident movements posed a significant threat to the status quo’s ideas of patriotism and loyalty to the establishment, and the penal system and the law were simply the most obvious and most direct ways to stop the action of dissent. This means of halting dissent was certainly not new to the Sixties and it was especially present in recent American memory; McCarthyism and the HUAC trials of the 1950s were an important Cold War precedent for the connection of dissident opinions with un-Americanism punishable by the law.

While some of these penal actions of the Sixties may not have been as notorious or obvious as the HUAC sedition trials, they were nonetheless insidious and intentional, as a 1976 Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations report indicated; one of the “long range goals” of the FBI’s COINTELPRO against black nationalists was to “prevent group

⁴³ “Protest: The Banner of Discontent,” *Time*, vol 90, no. 17, October 27 1967, 25.

⁴⁴ “The Radical Voice,” *Time*, vol 93, no. 16, April 18 1969, 55.

leaders from gaining ‘respectability’ by discrediting them,” and to attack the New Left by “having members arrested on marijuana charges,” among other covert “techniques.”⁴⁵ This technique of having members arrested on marijuana charges was a regular topic in a number of GI underground newspapers, as the editor of *Fatigue Press* Pvt. Bruce Peterson, was arrested on phony charges with police claiming they found “traces of marijuana” in his car.⁴⁶ *Fatigue Press* was one of many GI papers that took a critical stance against the army and Bruce Peterson’s arrest; “For several months, Killeen police and army intelligence men have harassed the Oleo Strut, the Summer of Support Coffee House in Killeen, and other gathering points for activists and hip soldiers,” wrote the journalist Harvey Stone in a press packet for the Liberation News Service, which the historian John McMillan has referred to as the “radical alternative to the Associated Press.”⁴⁷ Though the charges against Bruce Peterson were later dropped, harassment, arrest, and imprisonment of activists was a potentially grave threat to dissident movements and individuals.

Prison, as an American institution, was not as controversial and did not hold quite the same place in the American imagination in the 1960s as it does today, largely because of Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan’s ramping-up of the War on Drugs in the 1970s and 1980s. However, the Sixties marked an important turning point for the prison system, both as a tool against dissent and as a means of empowerment for the imprisoned. In an article detailing the development and

⁴⁵ “COINTELPRO: The FBI’s Covert Action Programs Against American Citizens,” in *“Takin’ It To the Streets”*: A *Sixties Reader*, 3rd edition, eds. Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 318, 319.

⁴⁶ “Frame-Up at Ft. Head,” *Vietnam GI*, September 1968, 3; “Free Gypsy Now,” *Fatigue Press*, no. 18, 1.

⁴⁷ Harvey Stone, “They Know Their Enemy,” *Liberation News Service*, Packet 101, August 30, 1968, A-11; John Campbell McMillan, *Smoking Typewriters: The Sixties Underground Press and the Rise of Alternative Media in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 83.

growing use of behaviour control in Marion Federal Penitentiary in Illinois, the historian Alan Eladio Gómez identified the prison system as a key site for dissident repression. ““The purpose of the Marion control unit is to control revolutionary attitudes in the prison system and in society at large,”” claimed a former Marion warden Ralph Aron, referring to the Control Units in which activist prisoners would undergo experimental behaviour control and extreme solitary confinement.⁴⁸ While Gómez’s 2006 article focused largely on the explicit action taken against Black Muslim activist and the resistance efforts of third-world multiracial prisoner groups in the early 1970s, he identified a distinct connection to the greater radicalism of the late Sixties and, more specifically, of 1968. The behaviour modification programs, ranging from extreme solitary confinement to torture, were put into use in the Control Units in 1972, though the U.S. Bureau of Prisons developed the program in 1968. At the head of one of the main legal challenges to this program of “cruel and unusual punishment” was the People’s Law Office (PLO), a law collective formed in the wake of the 1968 Democratic National Convention to handle the arrests of activists at the convention.⁴⁹ This connection of growing radical action and rhetoric with the expansion of prison as a means to not simply lock up potentially dangerous dissidents but to “control revolutionary attitudes” does not appear to be coincidental; it rather suggests a response to growing militancy in dissident movements and changing conceptions of the rule of law as an establishment tool to paint dissidence as an illegal activity.

Although this sort of activist repression in the prison system and the legal muzzling of the underground press was not immediately a part of the relationship of media cooptation or the

⁴⁸ Alan Eladio Gómez, “Resisting Living Death at Marion Federal Penitentiary, 1972,” *Radical History Review*, no 96 (Fall 2006), 61.

⁴⁹ Gómez, “Resisting Living Death at Marion Federal Penitentiary, 1972,” 76.

domestication of dissent, they were nonetheless explicit and deliberate establishment tools against radical threats to the status quo, as the COINTELPRO report suggested. Tactics such as these – arresting dissidents and underground press publishers and GI coffee house organizers, and using the prison system to deliberately attempt to “control revolutionary attitudes” – were a considerable threat to the sustainability of dissidence; the level of traditional power that the establishment could wield suggests that the process of cooptation and neutralization of dissent was indeed, at times, a process of the powerful imposing their traditional power on the powerless, or the less powerful. Traditional power is meant here as the law, as sway over the mainstream media, and as political decision-making power, and it had vast and powerful resources at its disposal.

Non-traditional power, or “cooptation in reverse,” however, was firmly in the hands of dissident movements; while they did not have the structural power of American law or economics or government behind them that their imagined establishment enemy did, they nonetheless harnessed and reimagined these institutions of power in a non-traditional and symbolically powerful way. There was an inherent fear in the establishment of dissident movements, whether they were hippies, draft-card-burners, Yippies, or anything in between; if there was no perceived threat, the establishment would have had no need to neutralize dissident politics, and no need to devote COINTELPRO resources to discrediting radical groups and individuals. This fear was at the root of non-traditional power, for to use non-traditional power was to harness this fear and perceived threat and to fight the establishment on their own terrain, much like Jerry Rubin stated about how to use establishment media tools against them. The

terrain of the law and prison may not have easily been theirs for the taking, but it was certainly fertile ground for an ideological struggle for what it meant to be an American.

Dissident movements waged their own war of cooptation against narrowly defined and almost impenetrably sacrosanct ideas of Americanism by subverting the very institutions dissidents saw as being used to muzzle and restrict dissent; prison became a crucial site for a radical reimagining and repurposing of patriotism and the law. “I’ll be surprised - and probably ashamed - if I haven’t had some experience of jail within the next year,” wrote the journalist Nat Hentoff in March of 1968 about his participation in movement activism. “I say this with no bravado,” he declared, noting his responsibilities to his job, to his wife, and to his children;⁵⁰ this form of resistance, of reimagining jail as a radical tool, was not just some romantic idea that “angry youth” or committed radical activists pursued. While there is no obvious historical record of Hentoff actually spending any time in jail, his declaration was nonetheless a part of a bigger dialogue about a prison or jail term being repurposed as a radicalizing experience, and almost as a rite of passage to radical action. *Time* magazine even acknowledged this growing discussion in its article from June of 1968 titled “The Cynical Idealists of ’68.” This article’s primary focus was on the lifting of graduate school deferments for the draft and how some of the graduating class of 1968 would become draft dodgers, and how many smoked pot, but they were “more restrained than the class of ’69-’71 are likely to be.”⁵¹ Like Hentoff’s article, it similarly addressed how “conscience-stricken” grads and activists envisioned the growing futility of dissent, and saw an increasing need for more active radical action. This *Time* article contained a

⁵⁰ Nat Hentoff, “From Dissent to What Kind of Resistance?” *Evergreen Review*, vol 12, no. 51, February 1968, 31.

⁵¹ “The Cynical Idealists of ’68,” *Time*, vol 91, no. 23, June 7 1968, 78.

similar resolution as Hentoff's; "Jail is where patriotism and morality intersect," it concluded, quoting Stanford senior Hugh West.⁵²

"Patriotism" and "morality" were crucial aspects of dissidents' use of prison and the justice system as a whole as a radicalizing weapon against establishment attempts at cooptation and repression. The public explanation for the Vietnam War was very much tied to patriotism – that American intervention in Southeast Asia sought to defend the United States and the free world from the spread of communism; thus, to support the war effort was to do one's patriotic duty and bolster the American Cold War ideology. From early on, though, antiwar groups or individuals, such as the SDS and especially antiwar GIs, envisioned the war as an American atrocity that trampled the freedom of the Vietnamese and the American people. SDSer Carl Ogelsby articulated a glaring discrepancy that he saw between rhetoric and action in a speech in which he denounced corporate liberalism as the true enemy of American freedom: "This country, with its thirty-some years of liberalism, can send 200 000 young men to Vietnam to kill and die in the most dubious of wars, but it cannot get 100 voter registrars to go into Mississippi."⁵³ To see the war, as well as domestic race relations, as unjust, and, as the former Green Beret-turned-anti-war-activist Donald Duncan said, as "a lie" was to reimagine American patriotism not as loyalty to the establishment, but as loyalty to one's conscience. Muhammad Ali, perhaps one of the most famous arrested draft resisters, summarized this sentiment when he said, "No, I'm not going ten thousand miles from here to help murder and kill and burn another poor people simply

⁵² "The Cynical Idealists of '68," 78.

⁵³ Carl Ogelsby, "Liberalism and the Corporate State," in *The New Radicals: A Report with Documents*, ed. Paul Jacobs and Saul Landau, (New York: Random House, 1966), 261.

to help continue the domination of white slavemasters over the darker people the world over.”⁵⁴ Prison, jail, and patriotism, then, all had a very specific relationship to each other and to dissidents whose ideas of morality greatly differed from the establishment’s. “People are finally starting to question the U.S.’s right to kill for peace,” wrote Hentoff in his discussion of radicalism and the experience of jail.⁵⁵ If jail and arrest were a means to both remove dissidents from public influence and to attempt to control their behaviour, dissidents’ treatment of this system of punishment and repression as a place to facilitate the reimagining of patriotism was a decisive step towards coopting a powerful establishment institution for radical purposes.

GIs in the military, which was itself a major American institution, were one of the most prominent groups to make the connection between reclaiming or redefining patriotism and defiance of the law. Sgt. Donald Duncan explicitly spoke about this relationship in a long, scathing article in *Ramparts* magazine in 1966 titled “The Whole Thing Was A Lie.” Duncan noted that when he got home from Vietnam and began publicly criticizing the Vietnam War effort, he was asked if he resented young anti-war activists who had never been to war, yet who felt they were in a position to speak out against it. “They are not unpatriotic,” he responded. “Again, the opposite is true. They are opposed to people, our own and others, dying for a lie, thereby corrupting the very word democracy.”⁵⁶ Oppositional reactions to Duncan’s article, many of which appeared in the June issue’s letters to the editor, drew on ideas of the law and punishment to defend establishment ideas of patriotism: “Sgt. Donald Duncan, a squealer. If this man is not guilty of sedition and punished for it, then I need to buy a new dictionary or throw my

⁵⁴ Gene Marine, “Nobody Knows My Name,” *Ramparts*, vol 5, no. 12, June 1967, 11.

⁵⁵ Hentoff, “From Dissent to What Kind of Resistance?” 32.

⁵⁶ Donald Duncan, “The Whole Thing Was A Lie,” *Ramparts*, vol 4, no. 10, February 1966, 24.

present one away,” wrote Andrew H. Treffs.⁵⁷ However, being “punished,” presumably by being jailed,⁵⁸ was not necessarily the threat to antiwar resisters that the greater public imagined it to be. “I realized that in the stockade, more than anyplace else, I was with people who were most like myself,” commented David Brown, a conscientious objector.⁵⁹ Like Hentoff, who urged that civil disobedience be used as a means to move from marches to more disruptive, confrontational resistance and action, these antiwar GIs and draft resisters and political prisoners alike all brought a revolutionary fervour to being incarcerated; if the jails were filled with respectable people - and who was more respectable than a GI? - “Where would authority be then—inside or outside the jails?”⁶⁰

The GI antiwar movement was a somewhat elusive part of the greater antiwar movement, though it was perhaps one of its most uniquely authoritative and threatening wings. When Duncan wrote his article for *Ramparts* magazine in 1966, anti-war GIs were a relatively marginal presence in the larger, more organized anti-war movement; Duncan is often credited as being one of the first Vietnam GIs to take such a public anti-war stance. By the end of the Sixties and into the Seventies, though, anti-war GIs had become a much greater part of a mass movement. Much of the literature about the GI antiwar movement, which was a highly-organized force from about 1969 to 1972, points to the advantageous and difficult position that GI activists were in, due to their highly visible nature and the public’s general respect for these traditionally patriotic heroes.

⁵⁷ Andrew H. Treffs, “Letter To the Editor,” *Ramparts*, vol 5, no. 1 (June 1966), 9.

⁵⁸ Critical responses to Duncan’s article included more explicit expressions of punishment, one whose author claimed he wanted to see Duncan and the editors of *Ramparts* on a platform “with a rope around your necks and I could pull the trigger and drop you”; Jno. J. Anderson, “Letter to the Editor,” *Ramparts*, vol 4, no. 12 (April 1966), 10.

⁵⁹ Richard Moser, *The New Winter Soldiers* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1996), 73.

⁶⁰ Hentoff, “From Dissent to What Kind of Resistance?” 32.

Much of the public, however, initially viewed their antiwar activism as a repudiation of their uniquely patriotic role. As the historian Andrew Hunt noted in his book *The Turning*, about the Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW), the general public often greeted early GI antiwar activists with indifference, or worse, with accusations of being “baby killers.”⁶¹ This sort of resentment is precisely what these letters to the editor that were published in *Ramparts* in response to Duncan’s article meant, as well as responses coming from within the military: “Sirs: I loathe and detest anything even remotely pinko, bolshevik, commie, so-called Liberal, or really any other name. Stay away from me! I’m an AMERICAN,” wrote Philip K. Fife, M/sgt USAF, in a telling statement about anti-communist expressions of patriotic Americanism.⁶² However, the GI antiwar movement ultimately gained considerable respect among civilian antiwar activists as they became a more prominent organization and as public feelings about the human and financial costs of the war became more critical. Their use of civil disobedience and the GI underground press made them a formidable opponent to the military’s attempts at stifling dissent, using their special position in society to challenge both the popular definition of patriotism and the efficacy of prison and arrest.

The GI underground press was a crucial tool for the growth of GI rights and challenges to the Vietnam War effort. It not only contained crucial information about strikes, mutinies, and demonstrations, but it also carried important and expansive—and ultimately threatening to the military brass—coverage about the military’s attempts to halt antiwar activism on army bases and in GI papers themselves. *The Ally*, a paper that was “published by an independent group of

⁶¹ Andrew Hunt, *The Turning: A History of Vietnam Veterans Against the War* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 3, 21.

⁶² Philip K. Fife, “Letter to the Editor,” *Ramparts*, vol 5, no. 1, June 1966, 9.

citizens, reservists, veterans and active-duty GIs to fill the information gap that exists for the American servicemen,”⁶³ and *Vietnam GI*, a paper published out of Chicago, covered a crucial moment in GI antiwar activism, when 43 black soldiers at Ft. Hood refused to go to the Democratic National Convention in Chicago in 1968. The GIs said they “won’t put down our black brothers” in Chicago, and were arrested on the army base. The article noted that the GIs “stopped going along with the Brass’s game,” and that the Brass worried millions more would follow. This article then went on to stress how difficult it was for the army to “railroad 43 at a time for punishment,” partially because of a breakdown in public opinion about the war and because of growing support for GI activism.⁶⁴ “At no time since pre Pearl Harbor days has the vast organism created to protect the nation against foreign enemies been under such furious home front attack,” lamented Laurence Barrett in an article in *Time* in April 1969.⁶⁵

The 1968 Democratic National Convention, though, was a complicated event for dissident activism, GI involvement in antiwar demonstrations, and the shaping of public opinion. The protestors’ mantra from the streets of Chicago, “The whole world is watching,” is a historically and historiographically controversial statement. Protestors’ intention with this chant was to state that millions of people around the world would bear witness to police brutality and finally see the truth of political repression. While some historical accounts have focused on how the Chicago protests actually resulted in sympathy for the police and intense frustration with the growing militancy of protestors, the Democratic National Convention in 1968 was, undeniably,

⁶³ “*The Ally* Is Published By An Independent Group Of Citizens, Reservists, Veterans And Active Duty GIs,” *The Ally*, no. 10 [http://www.sirmosir.com/archives_and_resources/library/articles/ally_40.html; Accessed Dec 11, 2014].

⁶⁴ “Ft. Hood Strike” *Vietnam GI* (September 1968), 1.

⁶⁵ Laurence Barrett, “The Military: Servant or Master of Policy?” *Time*, vol 92, no. 11, September 13, 1968, 20.

an important and very visible moment for the expansion of radical activism. “‘The whole world is watching.’ And it was,” stated an article in *Time*. The magazine’s response to the Democratic National Convention noted that the “police's reaction can only be described as ‘sanctioned mayhem,’” and that “reporters worldwide were responding with revulsion.”⁶⁶

While most accounts of the Democratic National Convention focus on the New Left and the Yippies, or on Chicago Mayor Daley and his police force, the Ft. Hood mutiny is a crucial part of the story and is immensely indicative of the growing realm of organized GI activism intersecting with civilian dissidence. “When young people in Chicago this week are confronted by troops, they will look closely—the Man might be a brother. Especially if he's from Fort Hood,” wrote Thorne Dreyer, a major figure in the underground press, in a dispatch for the Liberation News Service. “These guys were shafted for one beautiful reason: they refused to come to Chicago to bust our heads... Their demands were cool and clear: Solidarity with the movement in Chicago, solidarity with black brothers, self-determination for black people, and getting the hell out of Vietnam.”⁶⁷ Charged with “failure to obey a lawful order,” these soldiers’ refusal to go to Chicago and their blatant racial and antiwar sentiments put the GI antiwar movement squarely in the centre of cooptation of the establishment. Many of Daley’s police officers followed their orders, as traditional upholders of the law and protectors of the people. GIs were, in theory, like an ultra-patriotic version of the police. As antiwar activists, they were indeed in a unique position to repurpose the trope of patriotism and conscience through civil disobedience and arrest. They not only subverted and coopted jail and the army base as a place to

⁶⁶ “Dementia in the Second City,” *Time*, vol 92, no. 10 (September 6, 1968), 21-24.

⁶⁷ Thorne Dreyer, “Know Your Enemy,” *Liberation News Service*, no. 101, August 30, 1968, A-11.

spread antiwar radicalism, but they explicitly acted out a new definition of patriotism that was counter to their establishment-defined patriotic duty. Their display of this more radical patriotism was meant to cast the notion of American duty as something that must not be unquestioningly obeyed; it was something that symbolized the necessity for “the right to disobey illegal orders—like orders to go and fight in an illegal war in Vietnam.”⁶⁸

Though GIs were able to use their unique position from within an establishment institution to challenge definitions of patriotism, GI and civilian activists alike drew on ideas of legality to, quite literally, act out their reimagining of patriotism. Guerrilla street theatre became a prevalent means of protest and civil disobedience, as activists used the street as a theatre for orchestrated demonstrations to attempt to reach people in a more imaginative and involved way than traditional marches or protests. VVAW was one group that honed this technique through the early 1970s to both dramatize their anger and guilt and to encourage a rethinking of the United States’ position in Vietnam. As part of their guerrilla theatre demonstration, Operation Rapid American Withdrawal (RAW) in September 1970, they staged a demonstration at the Capitol in Washington, amongst unsuspecting tourists. Dressed as soldiers, members of the group chased other civilian-dressed activists through the streets, shooting them down and threatening them with knives, spilling fake blood on the sidewalk. “‘Nobody move!’” they shouted, demanding to see identification; “‘All these gooks are VC. Let’s get ‘em all...’ The tourists turned away in horror,” wrote Art Goldberg in his article, “Vietnam Vets: The Anti-War Army” in *Ramparts*.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Fred Gardner, “GI Protest: The Presidio Aftermath,” *Evergreen Review*, vol 14, no. 75, February 1970, 8.

⁶⁹ Art Goldberg, “Vietnam Vets: The Anti-War Army,” *Ramparts*, vol 10, no. 1, July 1971, 10.

The GIs then distributed a leaflet to the shocked onlookers. “A U.S. INFANTRY COMPANY JUST CAME THROUGH HERE!” it began.

IF YOU HAD BEEN VIETNAMESE —— We might have burned your house... We might have raped your wife and daughter... We might have turned you over to your government for torture... If it doesn't bother you that American soldiers do these things every day to the Vietnamese simply because they are “Gooks”, then picture YOURSELF as one of the silent VICTIMS. HELP US TO END THE WAR BEFORE THEY TURN YOUR SON INTO A BUTCHER or a corpse.⁷⁰

While appealing to the nation's collective sense of conscience was not always hugely effective, as was seen during the 1968 Democratic National Convention, guerrilla theatre became a useful way to shock the sensibilities of unsuspecting onlookers. Soldiers marching to the Pentagon to turn themselves in as war criminals spoke volumes about the guilt and culpability that had come to define these veterans' sense of duty to their country.⁷¹ This sort of action showed how GIs encouraged a rethinking of traditionally patriotic military duty by casting that duty as leading American citizens to commit war crimes. Of course, not all soldiers felt this sort of guilt or believed they were committing injustice. “If you're so cracked on democracy, then why don't you fight for it?” accused Paul Hierstein in the “GIs Speak Out” letters to the editor section of the September 1968 edition of *Vietnam GI*, referring specifically to the Ft. Hood 43.⁷² These antiwar soldiers had followed that line of patriotism—of fighting Communists to protect American democracy - and the experience of it shattered this illusion of unquestioned, black-and-white patriotic duty.

⁷⁰ Vietnam Veterans Against the War, “IF YOU HAD BEEN VIETNAMESE,” New York, 1971 [<http://www.25thaviation.org/johnkerry/0f160160.png>; Accessed November 7, 2014].

⁷¹ Goldberg, “Vietnam Vets: The Anti-War Army,” 13.

⁷² Paul Hierstein, “GIs Speak Out,” *Vietnam GI*, 2.

One common reaction to antiwar actions such as these, especially reactions from other soldiers, was to attack them as anti-American, though this accusation represented precisely the kind of public confusion about patriotism that antiwar soldiers and activists sought to challenge. Art Goldberg's article that detailed VVAW's guerrilla theatre actions also discussed the dramatic demonstration in which veterans threw their war medals back at the Capitol during Operation Dewey Canyon III in April 1971, calling the medals "symbols of shame, dishonor, and inhumanity."⁷³ One soldier at this demonstration explicitly linked this action to divided understandings of patriotism: "Dewey Canyon III is to me a representation of patriotism... I love what this country is supposed to stand for... When you say the word 'patriotism'... I think of somebody blind who really doesn't want to see truth," said John Upton in an interview with the historian Richard Moser.⁷⁴ These actions and sentiments thus showed how GIs encouraged a rethinking of traditionally patriotic military duty by casting that duty as laden with war crimes and as an establishment tool to discourage critical thinking about American policy. The critical point in John Upton's discussion of patriotism, though, was that he declared his love for what the United States was *supposed to stand for*. Like Donald Duncan, who believed antiwar protestors and draft resisters were the truly patriotic citizens of America for their courage and willingness to publicly name and protest injustices committed in the name of their country, this deep divide in ideas of what it meant to be American spoke to the complex relationship of cooptation and cooptation in reverse. This relationship was ultimately one of fighting for the ability to publicly define and challenge the most fundamental institutions and ideas of the United States.

⁷³ Goldberg, "Vietnam Vets: The Anti-War Army," 13.

⁷⁴ Moser, *The New Winter Soldiers*, 116.

While the demonstrations by VVAW did not necessarily cause all onlookers to become sympathetic to antiwar sentiments and their definitions of American duty, the GI antiwar movement's use of guerrilla theatre amounted to a powerful expression of cooptation in reverse, as it was much more difficult for the establishment to neutralize the dissent of uniformed GIs and decorated war heroes. Art Goldberg's discussion of VVAW's Dewey Canyon III demonstration revealed an important awareness amongst the GIs about their place in antiwar dissidence. Stressing the GIs' recognition of how important it was that they were taking the reins of the somewhat fledgling anti-war movement in the 1970s, he noted that President Nixon and other politicians in Washington had been able to easily ignore students and peaceniks, but he could not ignore the vets. "He'll have to notice. It would be disastrous to do otherwise," one veteran noted, following the "If You Had Been Vietnamese" demonstration. "Their grubby jungle fatigues and long hair and beards couldn't have endeared them to their congressmen, especially the more conservative ones," Goldberg commented about the VVAW's entrance into the halls of Congress. "Yet it was difficult, even for the hawks, even for Nixon, to write off a group of Vietnam vets, most of them wearing numerous decorations and many bearing evidence of multiple wounds, as just another bunch of crazies."⁷⁵ While their social position did make it more difficult for them to be discredited on these grounds of physical appearance, like activists such as Abbie Hoffman and other "longhairs" were, it also had the potential to draw a particularly vehement reaction from the public who, like the man who wrote to *Ramparts* about Duncan being a traitor, saw this challenge to the status quo as treasonous in a much more serious way than civilian anti-war activists.

⁷⁵ Goldberg, "Vietnam Vets: The Anti-War Army," 13.

Whether they were regarded at the time as heroic or treasonous, the GI antiwar movements' actions were more than the sum of their gains or losses, as this sort of dialogue, about the tension between heroism and treason, was at the heart of their efforts. VVAW may have gained some concessions from the government, such as Nixon deciding not to arrest veterans who camped in Potomac Park during their Operation Dewey Canyon III demonstration in April 1971.⁷⁶ Though they did not necessarily reach any major goals, such as directly ending the war in Vietnam, their actions were nonetheless one of the more potent examples of how the establishment also faced incredibly difficult challenges of radical cooptation of *their* institutions and ideologies. The GI antiwar movement's use of guerrilla theatre, which often drew on the Revolutionary War and ironic, historical dramatizations of patriotism, such as retracing the path of Paul Revere,⁷⁷ was powerful in the way it opened a public dialogue about different conceptions of patriotic duty. Even though GI movements did not begin to directly stage guerrilla theatre demonstrations until the Seventies, the idea of the street as a theatre was something that permeated radical ideas about activism, and it provided an important link with the civilian antiwar movement and their use of America and its institutions as a theatre for revolution.

Using the streets of America and its institutions as a theatre for revolution was indeed an important part of the GI antiwar movement in the Seventies, but it had a significant presence in Yippie demonstrations through the Sixties as well. Although the Ft. Hood 43 refused to go to the Chicago Democratic National Convention, there was still a heavy police and military presence there, which the Yippies believed provided a perfect theatre for the revolution. An article in *The*

⁷⁶ Hunt, *The Turning*, 97.

⁷⁷ Moser, *The New Winter Soldiers*, 117.

Seed,⁷⁸ an underground paper out of Chicago, was heavily involved in reporting about the Yippies, and its coverage of the Chicago Democratic National Convention was very much in line with the Yippie idea of the importance of theatrics and entertainment in revolutionary action. “This whole thing can be looked upon as a theatre. It is important that there's troops there, because they're an important part of the theatre,” said Jerry Rubin. “That week in Chicago will be a living theatre in America.”⁷⁹ Chicago being a living theatre in America implied that the country was a stage for disparate, prescribed roles—the role of the protestor, the role of the politician, the role of the law enforcer, and so on—and that these roles were coming together for a dramatization of the most extreme, and most heavily televised, and perhaps even the most absurd manifestations of these roles.

In the underground journalist and author John Schultz’s coverage of the DNC in the *Evergreen Review*, he commented that the Yippies were “an exercise in the absurd.”⁸⁰ Dissident discussions of life and protest in the 1960s were heavily laden with this idea of the absurd, likely a reference to author and social critic Paul Goodman’s landmark 1960 book *Growing Up Absurd*. However, in the case of the Yippies at the Democratic National Convention, it could perhaps also be read as a reference to the existentialist idea of absurdism and the plays of the Theatre of the Absurd, in which communication and meaning breaks down and becomes illogical, thus

⁷⁸ *The Seed* had some minor struggles with self-definition within the movement, as it became caught up in definitions of culture and politics. “The Grey Eminence,” presumably the pseudonym of the paper’s editor, put out a declaration about *The Seed*’s identity after it was put down for being neither the intellectual *East Village Other* nor the countercultural *San Francisco Oracle*. It declared, “The Seed isn't hard-core political, or hard-core head, or hard-core anything. We have no policy except possibly that of being useful to every one,” once again encouraging a mixing of ideas of culture and politics.

⁷⁹ “The Yippies in Chicago,” *The Seed*, vol 2, no. 3, 1968, 8.

⁸⁰ John Schultz, “Pigs, Prague, Other Democrats, Chicago, and the Sleeper in the Park,” *Evergreen Review*, vol 12, no. 60, November 1968, 32.

challenging the viewer to redefine their understandings of these seemingly meaningless human relations.

Regardless of the intentions of those who framed the era's dissidence in terms of "the absurd," it is useful to consider this idea of disparate, prescribed roles being almost nonsensically acted-out on the theatre-streets of America. Journalists and reporters' assumptions were certainly challenged at the convention, as they often found themselves on the wrong end of a police baton. The idealism of VVAW, an organization still in its infancy, was challenged as their delegation, involving one veteran from each state, became so disillusioned with seeking change through political channels that many of them joined the militants in massive outdoor demonstrations.⁸¹ The military's authority was challenged, as they faced a GI mutiny. Guerrilla theatre encompassed the whole of this dissident action and cast all participants, whether anti-war, pro-establishment, and so on, as people playing necessary dramatic roles. Most importantly, though, the use of guerrilla theatre once again foregrounded the importance of participation and the experience of culture and events. Historians often consider the Chicago DNC to be something of a watershed moment in the history of the period's upheavals. Rubin's statement that Chicago was a living theatre in America suggests that this turning point was a crucial participatory event for the American population to both act-out and watch and question themselves and their fellow role-players. As Thorne Dreyer had noted, "When young people in Chicago this week are confronted by troops, they will look closely—the Man might be a brother. Especially if he's from Fort Hood."⁸² Even though anti-war GIs did not explicitly stage radical guerrilla theatre

⁸¹ Hunt, *The Turning*, 28.

⁸² Dreyer, "Know Your Enemy," A-11.

demonstrations until 1970, GIs nonetheless became an important part of the radical community and its guerrilla street theatre by simply playing the role of the military in the living theatre of America in 1968.

While it is useful to consider the 1968 Democratic National Convention and the GI antiwar movement's participation as an important "play" in a "living theatre in America," using American institutions as a stage for guerrilla theatre had a much larger scope than the upheavals in Chicago. Jerry Rubin dressing up as a Revolutionary War soldier for his HUAC summons, for example, was a symbolically powerful instance of using the courtroom as a stage for dramatizing the ironies of American patriotism. Rubin's impersonation of a Revolutionary War soldier may not have been as explicit as the GIs who drew on the Revolutionary War for their guerrilla street theatre demonstrations. However, by explicitly bringing that image to the courtroom, he offered an important dramatization of how the American values of free speech and the right to dissent had become so separated in establishment interpretations and enforcement of patriotism. In his 1996 work about Vietnam-era GI antiwar protest, the historian Richard Moser examined the cultural construction of the American "soldier-ideal," which was "rooted in the experience of the culture of the frontier and of empire," and which was "transmitted to soldiers through media propaganda."⁸³ What Moser has ultimately defined is the creation of an American, establishment myth of what a soldier should be in the American imagination. Rubin adopted this myth of the soldier ideal, rooted in the formative American experience of the Revolutionary War, and repurposed it as a symbol rooted in the experience of the culture of *dissent* against frontier and empire.

⁸³ Moser, *The New Winter Soldiers*, 6.

This instance of dissent and of using the courtroom as a theatre is why Rubin and other Yippies are so important; their actions were less about explicit resistance and more about reclaiming the offensive by using establishment media tools, symbols, and institutions against them. The HUAC summons and courtrooms became popular means for Yippies to theatrically express their dissent by repurposing methods of criminal justice, and they certainly drew the ire of establishment representatives. During the famous 1969 trial of the Chicago Eight, Abbie Hoffman, Dave Dellinger, Jerry Rubin, Rennie Davis, Tom Hayden, John Froines, Bobby Seale, and Lee Weiner were accused of conspiring to disrupt the previous year's Democratic National Convention. Seale would eventually be removed as one of the defendants, and the group was subsequently referred to as the Chicago Seven. During the trial, folk singers such as Arlo Guthrie and Judy Collins were called as witnesses, and when they sang for the jury from the witness stand, "they were admonished that 'this is a criminal trial, not a theatre.'"⁸⁴ The trial "has made a vulgar carnival of our courts," lamented a writer for *Life* magazine, in "The Chicago Seven Trial Game," which asked "unbelievable questions [that] are based on an actual trial that took place in a federal courtroom."⁸⁵

This trial was absolutely a criminal trial (though the defendants greatly disputed the actual criminality of their actions), but the courtroom was absolutely a theatre as well; some of the questions this game in *Life* magazine asked reveal an almost indignant and angry incredulity at the audacity of the defendants to behave in such a way in a federal court. Some of the questions asked, "Who tried to sing a folk song from the witness stand?" "Who munched on jelly

⁸⁴ Tom Hayden, "A Generation On Trial," *Ramparts*, vol 9, no. 1, July 1970, 21.

⁸⁵ "The Chicago Seven Trial Game: Can You Tell the Players?" *Life*, vol 68, no. 6, February 20, 1970, 70

beans, read comic books and cried ‘oink oink’ at witnesses?” “Who blew kisses to the jury?” “Who asked prospective jurors, ‘Do your daughters wear brassieres?’” and “Who showed up for a session wearing judicial robes?”⁸⁶ These theatrics were certainly not lost on the public nor on government officials, and they were an attempt not just to repurpose establishment institutions, but to integrate dissident world views and understandings of crime and punishment into the mainstream on their own terms. *Ramparts* published an entire issue devoted to Tom Hayden’s upcoming book on the trial, and in the section titled “Our Identity on Trial,” Hayden claimed, “This behaviour was the ultimate defiance of a court system which demands the repression of people into well-behaved clients, advocates and jurors.”⁸⁷

These activists seemingly took any opportunity to use the courtroom as a stage for their defiance of establishment institutions and its expectations of “good behaviour”; far from being a deterrent to “illegal” behaviour, these activists, especially Hoffman and Rubin, revelled in their arrest, and used the judicial system as a uniquely opportune and desirable place for activism. For example, HUAC was a popular target and stage for Yippie theatrics, which was a symbolically relevant institution to target using street theatre. “This sort of public performance had practically vanished during the McCarthy years,” wrote Bradford Martin about public singing in protest movements and the theatrical, community-driven transformation of public space, linking its near-disappearance to HUAC’s censoring of performers.⁸⁸ It is not surprising, then, that Yippie activists, and movement activists in general, would revel in being targeted by HUAC with an

⁸⁶ “The Chicago Seven Trial Game,” *Answers: Judy Collins, The Chicago Seven, Abbie Hoffman, Defense Attorney William Kunstler, and Judge Julius Hoffman, Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin.*

⁸⁷ Hayden, “The Trial,” 21.

⁸⁸ Martin, *The Theatre Is In the Street*, 3.

almost childish glee, giddy with excitement at the prospect of challenging the establishment from within its own institutions of power. “‘HUAC’s giving out subpoenas! HUAC’s giving out subpoenas!’ The word spread like fire,” wrote Rubin in *DO IT!*, in a chapter about HUAC investigating the Vietnam Day Committee, an activist group of which Rubin was a founding member. “Those who got subpoenas became heroes. Those who didn’t had *subpoenas envy*. It was almost sexual. ‘Whose is bigger?’ ‘I want one, too.’” After receiving his subpoena, Rubin headed over to the San Francisco city hall and ranted and raved for the cameras. “The press hung on every word. I was playing Angry Radical, but inside I was laughing... HUAC was not stifling dissent, but stimulating it—to greater and greater heights. People who did not get subpoenas worried that they hadn’t done enough against the war.”⁸⁹ Rubin and movement activists in the 1960s were by no means the first individuals or groups to speak out against HUAC, but Rubin’s discussion of this sort of “subpoena envy” and the theatrical opportunism associated with being a HUAC target is indicative of an intentional indulgence in “illegal” or suspect activism. It was a means of removing the establishment from the offensive, and thus repurposing establishment forms of punishment as a form of politically and culturally engaged media entertainment.

As Hoffman and Rubin so often contended, visual media entertainment was a crucial and culturally relevant way of making activism accessible to the general public, and they drew on mainstream media entertainment to further defuse establishment punishment. Hoffman stated: “In a sense, the indictment [in the Chicago Seven trial] is like receiving an academy award for our work... Flower children have lost their innocence and grown their horns,” referencing perhaps the most mainstream of entertainment media awards, and how this award was symbolic

⁸⁹ Rubin, *DO IT!* 57-58.

of the growing militancy of countercultural “lifestyle” activists.⁹⁰ Continuing with this reference to the grandeur and symbolic pinnacle of the Academy Awards, Rubin published his “acceptance speech” for “The Academy Award of Protest” in an article in *Ramparts* about his experiences in Chicago, declaring, “This is the greatest honor of my life. It is with sincere humility that I accept this federal indictment.”⁹¹ Hoffman and Rubin, as well as Tom Hayden, Dave Dellinger, and Rennie Davis, did end up going to jail after being convicted of crossing state lines with intent to incite a riot.⁹² However, their treatment of the case and the indictment as a radicalizing stage was a decisive step towards wielding the criminal justice system as a weapon against establishment attempts at neutralizing cultural expressions of dissidence.

However, this approach to arrest and indictment did not dismiss the gravity of being subject to the law, regardless of one’s attitude towards it. “Maybe the man can't bust our music but he sure as hell can bust our musicians,” proclaimed Hoffman in *Woodstock Nation* in his discussion of cultural arrest and the sanctity of cultural products in protest movements. A self-proclaimed cultural revolutionary, Hoffman continued to take a hard stance against electoral politics and the more bookish politics of the New Left, claiming, “Politics keeps people from making their own revolutions. The cultural view creates outlaws, politics breeds organizers.”⁹³ The problem with being a self-proclaimed cultural revolutionary, though, was that it did not fit with established definitions and expressions of criminality. It ended up causing Hoffman a great

⁹⁰ Abbie Hoffman, *Woodstock Nation: A Talk-Rock Album* (New York: Random House, 1969), 77.

⁹¹ Jerry Rubin, “Inside the Great Pigasus Plot,” *Ramparts*, vol 8, no. 6 (December 1969), 18.

⁹² Marty Jezer, *Abbie Hoffman: American Rebel* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1993), 209; Though they were given five-year sentences, the defendants only spent two weeks in Cook County jail before the verdict was appealed on issues of bail, and the court of appeals overturned the verdicts in 1972 “on the basis of judicial and prosecutorial errors.”

⁹³ Hoffman, *Woodstock Nation*, 7.

deal of emotional pain and created a greater divide between himself and New Left activists. He insisted that when he appeared in court for the Chicago Seven trial, he wanted to be charged because he had long hair, not because he supported the Vietnamese National Liberation Front; because he smoked pot, not because he supported black liberation. “Finally, I want to be tried for having a good time, not for being serious.”⁹⁴ While making this distinction was certainly relevant to Hoffman’s identity and the ideals of Yippie activism, it ultimately did little to alter his being subject to the cultural expressions of the establishment following his indictment, most notably with regards to long hair. Hoffman fiercely defended his long hair as a symbol of dissent and countercultural empowerment, but he was nonetheless subject to a humiliating hair cut by prison officials when he was sent to jail following the Chicago Seven sentencing. Hoffman angrily and violently fought the prison haircut, eventually being physically restrained. The hair cut and defiance against what he saw as establishment prison culture was so important to Hoffman that he claimed to have never forgiven Tom Hayden of SDS for *not* putting up a fight.⁹⁵ It was not the sort of cultural fight that Hayden valued as a useful expression of dissidence, certainly not in the way that Hoffman did.

It is perhaps curious that hair figured so largely in ideas of Sixties activism and establishment hostility towards activists, but it was indeed the most politically-charged fashion statement, representative of a major power struggle. The historian Jonah Raskin recalled Republicans for Richard Nixon proudly and ostentatiously “displaying severed hippie hair” at a Republican Party rally. He referred to these legally forced haircuts as “hippie scalplings,” a

⁹⁴ Hoffman, *Woodstock Nation*, 7.

⁹⁵ Jonah Raskin, *For the Hell Of It: The Life and Times of Abbie Hoffman* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 215.

reference that invokes a powerful struggle of violent frontier conquest and resistance. This follicularly-based power struggle is part of a major focus in the discussion amongst historians of cooptation and media representations of radical and countercultural activism. This discussion examines how frequently journalistic and media accounts of protests completely bypassed the content of a protest, and focused rather on the “ragged” appearance of the activists. In an article in *Time*, covering the Vietnam Day Committee’s international protest initiative, the International Days of Protest Against American Military Intervention in October of 1965, the author referred to the protestors as “A ragtag collection of the unshaven and unscrubbed—they could be called Vietniks.” The author also focused primarily on issues of cleanliness in the same paragraph in which he noted an activist burning a draft card.⁹⁶ This sort of coverage may initially appear to be biased and unfair towards activists, but it is also somewhat paradoxical that it was also precisely the way in which many of the Yippies talked about and valued themselves and their community; *their* focus on long hair in their own journalism and writings and actions often glossed over the specifics of their more politically-oriented intentions. This focus was largely because their politically-oriented intentions were precisely to make such cultural issues—such as hair—the subject of active engagement.

Once again, though, there was considerable tension and blurring of the lines between ideas of culture and politics. New Left activists certainly sported long hair, but it was ultimately their more political approach that suffered as a result of an uneven focus on their more newsworthy and “smear-worthy” physical attributes. A number of these politically and culturally engaged activists clearly articulated this long-hair-hygiene divide when they broke with the New

⁹⁶ “And Now, the Vietnik,” *Time*, vol 87, no. 45 (October 22, 1965), 25A.

Left or the Counterculture, cut their hair, and went “Clean for Gene”—clean being the operative word—in their support for Eugene McCarthy at the 1968 Democratic National Convention. Carl Ogelsby explicitly articulated how hair and appearance had become a casualty in the battle of cooptation, referring to these activists as “former long-hairs” who had allowed themselves to be coopted by mainstream politics.⁹⁷ Jerry Rubin’s “A Yippie Manifesto,” published in the *Evergreen Review*, stated that “long hair is vital to us because it enables us to recognize each other... it ties us together in a visible counter-community.”⁹⁸ This emphasis could indeed transcend divisions between cultural and political forms of activism. In the biographical blurb about Rick Margolies, an activist and one of the essayists who contributed to *The New Left: A Collection of Essays*, it was emphasized that “He is bearded, has long hair, and drives a black motorcycle,” while also proudly declaring that “he is a three year probate for non-cooperation with the draft.”⁹⁹

It is ironic, though, that this “visible counter-community” could be so easily infiltrated; Jerry Rubin’s hired bodyguard, Bob Pierson, at the Democratic National Convention was in fact an undercover agent “disguised as a long-haired biker.” While appearing in court, Rubin noted: “Suddenly appearing at the door... was Bob, slick-haired, clean-shaven, and dressed in a suit.” The *Chicago Tribune* headline the next day read ““HOW COP SPIED ON YIPPIES: UNSHAVEN, UNBATHED, HE INFILTRATED TOP RANKS TO GAIN SECRETS, MADE BODYGUARD FOR CHIEFTAIN.””¹⁰⁰ Both a symbol of dissident pride and a tool of covert

⁹⁷ David Farber, *Chicago '68* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 104.

⁹⁸ Jerry Rubin, “A Yippie Manifesto,” *Evergreen Review*, vol 13, no. 66, (May 1969), 83.

⁹⁹ Priscilla Long, “Biographical Notes,” in *The New Left: A Collection of Essays*, ed. Priscilla Long (Boston: Extending Horizon Books, 1970), 459.

¹⁰⁰ Rubin, “Inside the Great Pigasus Plot,” 14.

infiltration, long hair certainly had the power to draw the ire of the establishment, but its revolutionary potential seemed little more than symbolic. It seemed to hinder the movement more than it helped, disrupting activists' actions, as with Rubin's legal troubles because of his under-cover bodyguard, as well as COINTELPRO agents who sought to infiltrate movement organizations and disrupt them from within.¹⁰¹

Regardless of how important activists deemed long hair, the Yippies' use of it as a symbol of defiance also became a self-styled symbol of solidarity with the oppressed. This self-styled solidarity, however, often pointed to a self-indulgence which, to some, bordered on ignorance. Hoffman and Rubin wore their long hair with a pride that they believed marked their anti-establishment "otherness," and they commonly referred to this politically and culturally charged style as marking them as "white niggers of America."¹⁰² "You want to get a glimpse of what it feels like to be a nigger? Let your hair grow long," Hoffman wrote in *Revolution For the Hell of It*.¹⁰³ Hoffman was involved with the civil rights movement and with SNCC in the early-mid Sixties,¹⁰⁴ but he ultimately did not believe in activism based on racial divisions, which overshadowed what he believed to be more widespread and inclusive social and economic concerns. Rubin was not significantly involved with the civil rights movement, though he was

¹⁰¹ "COINTELPRO: The FBI's Covert Action Programs Against American Citizens," in *"Takin' It To the Streets": A Sixties Reader*, 3rd edition, eds. Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 317.

¹⁰² Rubin, *DO IT!*, 80.

¹⁰³ Hoffman, *Revolution For the Hell Of It*, 95.

¹⁰⁴ Jonah Raskin, one of Hoffman's biographers, pointed out an inconsistency in Hoffman's story about his involvement with SNCC's Freedom Summer in 1964 and the story of SNCC members Bob and Dottie Zellner. He noted that the Zellners claimed to have never encountered Hoffman in Mississippi, and that they never recruited him, whereas in his autobiography, he claimed to have participated. Raskin also discusses Hoffman's recollection of his involvement at the 1964 Democratic National Convention, at which the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party fought to be seated; Raskin claims there is no evidence to support Hoffman's story. However, he does support Hoffman's involvement in the Northern white sojourn to the south for 1965 Freedom Rides; Raskin, *For the Hell Of It*, 52-55.

certainly sympathetic to the cause of fighting racial oppression. However, his and Hoffman's ideas of race became less about skin colour and more about the cultural experience of oppression. "Aunt Sadie, long hair is our black skin," wrote Rubin, explaining to his aunt that, "Long hair turns white middle-class youth into niggers... It's instant confrontation."¹⁰⁵ As discussed earlier, it certainly *was* instant confrontation. However, this sort of racial comparison completely eclipsed one obvious fact: that growing one's hair long was a choice—a politically and culturally charged choice with great social significance, but a choice nonetheless—whereas to be black was, at its most basic level, not a choice. Long hair was indeed a powerful symbol, but the power of it as a symbol of otherness perhaps went to these Yippies' heads—literally.

With regards to cooptation, this likening of Yippies to radically active black people—which is presumably what Rubin and Hoffman meant by using the word "nigger" instead of a less culturally charged term—revealed an attempt at creating cultural solidarity through adopting and imagining the cultural experience of America's most oppressed racial minority. This adoption of a racial "otherness" attempted to create an inclusive anti-establishment offensive force to do battle with establishment efforts at cooptation and neutralization. However, it unfortunately did not have enough cultural sensitivity towards the importance of radical rhetoric; calling oneself a "white nigger" did not create racial inclusiveness in what were often loosely segregated protest movements. Chester Anderson, a prominent Digger¹⁰⁶ activist in San Francisco who was largely responsible for the publishing wing of the intensely grass-roots,

¹⁰⁵ Rubin, *DO IT!* 94.

¹⁰⁶ The Diggers were a group of activists operating out of San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury district. They borrowed the name "Diggers" from a seventeenth-century British communal group who "tilled [the land] in the name of the people" and gave food away. The Diggers regularly organized street theatre demonstrations, operated "Free Stores" where they gave away basic goods and food, and avoided central leadership and the media; Ralph J. Gleason, "The Power of Non-Politics, or the Death of the Square Left," *Evergreen Review*, vol 11, no. 49 (October 1967), 43.

community-action based radical collective, published his “Two Page Racial Rap” in February 1967. Under the subheading, “HAIGHT/ASHBURY IS THE FIRST SEGREGATED BOHEMIA I’VE EVER SEEN!” he declared, “Dear all my bretheren [*sic*]: we have a race problem. Along with all the other things we’re developing, we have developed new patterns of prejudice. Spades don’t like hippies; hippies don’t like niggers,” he argued, pointing to widespread racial divisions between radical and countercultural activist groups.

Though he was writing more specifically about the countercultural community in San Francisco’s Haight-Ashbury and not necessarily about all other hippie communities, he was nonetheless privy to this adoption of racial oppression and “white nigger” identity based on long hair. “They (the “spades”) resent our dipping so blithely into their ghetto: we can get out by cutting our hair, most of them know they can never get out.”¹⁰⁷ Abbie Hoffman was closely allied with the Diggers and their ideas of “free” society—free food, free shelter, and so on—and there is arguably some validity to his idea that, by growing one’s hair long, one can get a *glimpse* of what it was like to experience racial oppression. Anderson, though, ultimately aimed to break down any illusions of idealism that “long-hairs” such as Hoffman and Rubin might have had about their connection to racial oppression. He focused rather on how white countercultural activists, no matter how well-intentioned they were, ultimately coopted the rhetoric of the black experience of oppression, and selected its most radically compelling features to buttress their claim to social oppression.

¹⁰⁷ Chester Anderson, “Two page racial Rap,” Communication Company (February 9, 1967) [http://www.diggers.org/Communication-Company-Archives/Chester_Anderson_Papers_BL_Folder_02_February_1967/index.html]; accessed November 25, 2014]

Anderson was careful to credit the black community with being the “spiritual fathers” of the Beats—and thus the hippies, Diggers, and seemingly the whole countercultural community. However, the predominantly white community in the Haight-Ashbury, which was considered the hippie mecca of the Sixties, revealed to him a significant racial divide. This divide, he noted, often saw white radicals coopting elements of black culture and the black experiences of “otherness” in American society. Cooptation was not only a top down or a bottom up relationship involving the establishment and radical activists—it was also a relationship within dissident movements themselves that involved a sort of claim to radical righteousness based on the level of oppression one felt he or she was subject to. Robert Jones, in his July 1967 article in *Time*, titled simply, “The Hippies,” made explicit mention of this trend towards hippies’ selective adoption of black culture, observing that “...the Negro, a model of cool to the Beats [who were the progenitors of the hippies], is a rare figure in the hippie scene.”¹⁰⁸ In New Left and countercultural writings, too, there was an implicit omission of a black presence in the hippie community of the Haight-Ashbury. Guy Strait, who published the countercultural paper *The Haight-Ashbury Maverick*, published an account of the hippie movement, in which he argued that the establishment considered them to be dangerous to the status quo. He also noted that the Department of Health was concerned about living conditions in the Haight and wanted to shut down the community. He then pointed out, though, that the Department of Health had no such concerns or intentions towards impoverished neighbourhoods with predominantly black populations.¹⁰⁹ Though it was not likely his intention, this comparison made an implicit

¹⁰⁸ Robert Jones, “The Hippies,” *Time*, vol 9, no. 1, July 7, 1967, 19.

¹⁰⁹ Guy Strait, “What Is A Hippie?” in *Takin’ It To The Streets: A Sixties Reader*, Ed. Alexander Bloom, Wini Breines (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 269.

statement about the racial character of this decisive hippie community, and held it in direct but separate comparison to the black ghetto.

This relationship is indeed another facet of cooptation and cooptation in reverse, which is a sort of cooptation or neutralization from within dissident movements. The issue with cooptation from within is that it was often a much more insidious and sometimes unintentional process in comparison to establishment cooptation and radical cooptation in reverse. Times Change Press, a small radical publishing group operating out of New York City from 1970 to 1974, published a collection of essays that were largely reflective in nature. Offering analyses, opinions, and interpretations of social, political and cultural trends that developed through the mid to late Sixties and into the early Seventies, one of its pamphlets focused on issues of hip culture from a Yippie, third world, feminist, Marxist, high-school student, and anarchist perspective. On the back cover of this volume, the editors asked two conflicting questions, drawing attention to how dramatically definitions and interpretations of the idea of “hip culture”¹¹⁰ and the culture of dissidence could vary. “Is the ideology of Hip Culture the essence of self-determination, of the universal right of the individual to control herhis [sic] everyday life; the harbinger of the end of domination, authoritarianism, hierarchy and power?” it began, assessing the empowerment that could come from participating in this ideology of dissident, nonconformist, “hip” culture—or, in other words, a celebration of “abandoning the creeping

¹¹⁰ As this pamphlet from Times Change Press suggested, “hip culture” was a somewhat amorphous term that was heavily used and analyzed in the Sixties, and the purpose of the pamphlet was to explore definitions and ideas of what that term meant and how it applied to both dissident and corporate culture. A number of historians, such as Marty Jezer and Thomas Frank, have discussed it in relation to the Beat poet Norman Mailer’s 1959 essay, “The White Negro: Superficial Reflections on the Hipster.” Frank noted how Mailer suggested that “The answer to conformity was hip.” Hip culture was thus a culture based on non-conformity, though many critics of hip culture, such as the Diggers, believed that non-conformity was intimately tied to consumption of “hip wares” and fashions; Frank, *The Conquest of Cool*, 22; Rozsack, *The Making Of A Counterculture*, 167.

meatball.” The editors then asked, “OR Is ‘do your own thing’ the slogan of hip middle-class, white men who continue to do their thing, as their straight counterparts have always done, by dominating and exploiting women, the Third World and working people?”¹¹¹

These contrasting questions spoke to the great confusion that cooptation caused, even within radical movements, in the way that the adoption of radical style or rhetoric could ultimately exploit others in the name of being “hip” or radical. In their essay “Love Is Just A Four Letter Word,” the Lower East Side Women’s Liberation Collective’s essay made a very gender and class-conscious argument against the purity of intention of the hippies. Their observation of the hippies was that they “flaunt the superiority of their lifestyle. They can choose to live in slums but have contempt for people who have to live there,” they argued, stressing that “Dropping out is a game open only to middle-class men. They can play at an alternative while still maintaining their class privilege in a class society.”¹¹² This concern with poverty was such a deep issue to many Sixties activists; “We are people of this generation, bred in at least modest comfort,” read the opening lines of SDS’s The Port Huron Statement. Many SDS activists, such as Tom Hayden, struggled with the psychological weight of the revolutionary purity of having economic comfort in what they saw as an economically unjust society; Hayden left graduate school and went to live with “the wretched of Newark” in 1964.¹¹³ The Lower East Side Women’s Liberation Collective openly criticized the intention behind this sort of adopted

¹¹¹ “Counterculture/Counterrevolution,” *Hip Culture: 6 Essays on its Revolutionary Potential: Yippie, Third World, Feminist, Marxist, High School Student, Anarchist* (New York: Times Change Press, 1970), back cover.

¹¹² Lower East Side Women’s Liberation Collective, “Love Is Just A Four Letter Word,” *Hip Culture: 6 Essays on its Revolutionary Potential: Yippie, Third World, Feminist, Marxist, High School Student, Anarchist* (New York: Times Change Press, 1970), 32.

¹¹³ Newfield, “Hayden-Marat Dylan-Sade: Defining A Generation,” 23.

poverty. Arguing that society privileged white, middle-class men, they saw hip culture as a way for dissident men to indulge in a sort of romanticized poverty and oppression without truly knowing the experience of being a second-class citizen.

Similarly, in an article in *The New Left: A Collection of Essays* by Evelyn Goldfield, Sue Munaker, and Naomi Weisstein, three activists in the University of Chicago-based Women's Liberation Group, they again argued that the hippies had coopted the fashion style of the Beats, but that their intention and behaviour was so misguided that their style and attitudes ultimately became oppressive and self-indulgent towards women and minorities. "Only the upper class is 'free' to emulate the rebels; it has no higher class to imitate," they claimed.¹¹⁴ This point drew together complicated issues of class, radicalism, and cooptation. They suggested that radicals within these relatively affluent dissident movements themselves coopted and adopted the style and lifestyle of the impoverished as a sort of marker of dissident purity. This "cooptation from within" by dissidents, no matter how well-intentioned or self-indulgent an activist may have been, obscured the realities of institutionalized racism or sexism by making the impoverished lifestyle "hip." The "mystique of Voluntary Poverty," as Paul Goodman called it in *Growing Up Absurd*, indeed had complicated associations with the style and lifestyle of the impoverished and the oppressed, because, in some ways, it was indeed a choice to forego the affluent life that was more accessible to white men than racial minorities or women. However, the choice to "drop out" of the soul-numbing "Rat Race" and to adopt poverty as many hippies did, no matter how

¹¹⁴ Evelyn Goldfield, Sue Munaker, and Naomi Weisstein, "A Woman Is A Sometime Thing," in *The New Left: A Collection of Essays*, ed. Priscilla Long (Boston: Extending Horizon Books, 1969), 266.

self-indulgent it may have seemed to some, was an important expression of the need for emotional survival and individual expression.¹¹⁵

It is not an accident that these articles that were so critical of the hippie movement and ideas of adopted poverty were primarily from a feminist perspective. It was often in feminist writings that such vitriolic criticism of the inconsistencies between countercultural and radical rhetoric and the realities for women and minorities appeared. These criticisms came from a growing feminist consciousness in women, who had a much different experience of the dissidence of hip culture. “Just as capitalism expands the war in the name of peace, Hip Culture imprisons women in the name of freedom and exploits women in the name of love,” the Lower East Side Women’s Liberation Collective argued, stressing how “hip” men so often relied on women to do the household work and child-rearing that would allow them to “laze around” and spout countercultural slogans like “free love”; that was their feminist understanding of “dropping out.”¹¹⁶ This sentiment was indeed a founding principle of the women’s movement, and was a significant part of the discussion of women in New Left groups like SDS, as well as black women in organizations like SNCC. While the influence of black activism on New Left politics was discussed and acknowledged at length in New Left literature, as was the influence of black culture on the Beats, women were not considered such important political and cultural founders of the movement. Their position in this relationship of cooptation and neutralization from within radical and countercultural movements themselves, then, was considerably less apparent in dissident writings.

¹¹⁵ Goodman, *Growing Up Absurd*, 66.

¹¹⁶ Lower East Side Women’s Liberation Collective, “Love Is Just A Four Letter Word,” 39, 35.

“Progressive reconstructions present the 1960s as if women were almost completely outside the realm of radical politics,” argued Alice Echols, a historian of radical feminism, about how women, as activists, only became truly relevant in the historical record when they became women’s *issues* activists.¹¹⁷ This analysis of cooptation and neutralization of women by the dominant, male activists in radical movements offers an explanation as to how some of these male activists could consider women their liberated equals, while women themselves struggled with being relegated to inferior and menial positions. Even in the progressive *Ramparts* magazine, there was a glaring similarity to the the way the mainstream media offered skewed, simplistic versions of radicals and dissident action. As argued earlier, one method by which the establishment and mainstream media would neutralize radical politics was by adopting and selling its most marketable styles, and removing the radical politics at the root of these styles; or as John Lahr articulated it in “The End of the Underground,” “The world began to adopt the Underground’s artistic expression of political disgust (but hedged on the ideas behind it).”¹¹⁸ Warren Hinckle, the editor of *Ramparts*, and his wife, Marianne, co-authored an article in the February 1968 issue of *Ramparts* which, probably unwittingly, partook in this method of cooptation and neutralization by focusing on the most flashy, exciting trends and rhetoric of female empowerment. The Hinckles’ “Special Report,” “A History of the Rise of the Unusual Movement for Women Power in the United States, 1961-1968” opened with a narrative, telling a story of two women—predominantly referred to as “ladies” throughout the article—speeding down a freeway. “It is necessary at this point in our story to pause for a two-second commercial

¹¹⁷Alice Echols, “Nothing Distant About It: Women’s Liberation and Sixties Radicalism” in *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, ed. David Farber (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 152.

¹¹⁸ Lahr, “The End of the Underground,” 46.

to take due notice of the fact that the speeding Chevrolet was running on women power,” they declared, zeroing in on the black high heels, fishnet stockings, and the “smashing camel zipper suit” of the driver, Jeannette Rankin, and her passenger, Vivian Hallman.¹¹⁹

While the article boasted about its subjects’ professional accomplishments and their political and antiwar activism, it did so in such a way as to constantly temper any seriousness with comments about appearance or ultimately non-threatening lady-like behaviour. For example, in discussing Rankin’s politics, the article noted that “Miss Rankin... believes, with the single stubbornness of an elderly lady banging her umbrella over the head of a man beating his horse, that it is important for the United States both to leave other people alone politically and to feed the impoverished of the world.”¹²⁰ While references such as this one may have been subtle, the article’s reference to women’s fashion as it related to a so-called radical identity were considerably more overt. The Hinckles notoriously referred to a group of women who organized the Jeannette Rankin Brigade, a January 1968 women’s peace march in Washington, D.C., as “the miniskirt caucus.” They commented that the women were “usually attractive, most are liberated sexually, and the majority dress in miniskirts, high boots, and bright colours.”¹²¹ While the Hinckles may have just been indulging in the fervour of the sexual revolution, which championed the mini skirt and such fashions as signals of a sexually liberated woman, this article received such tremendous criticism, much of which appeared in the May 1968 issue’s “Letters”

¹¹⁹ Warren Hinckle and Marianne Hinckle, “A History of the Rise of the Unusual Movement for Women Power in the United States 1961-1968,” *Ramparts*, vol 6, no. 7 (February 1968), 22; Jeannette Rankin was the first woman member of the House of Representatives, and Vivian Hallman was a model-turned-real-estate-agent and “wife of a legendary San Francisco Attorney” Vincent Hallman. The Hinckles credited Vivian Hallman with pursuing her career all while raising six children, “all of whom grew up to become professional and/or quite fearless radicals.”

¹²⁰ Hinckle and Hinckle, “A History of the Rise of the Unusual Movement for Women Power in the US,” 24.

¹²¹ Hinckle and Hinckle, “A History of the Rise of the Unusual Movement for Women Power in the US,” 31.

section, that one cannot help but wonder if the Hinckles indeed meant their article to be a satire, as one letter to the editor suggested.¹²²

Whether it was indeed meant as a satire or not, a letter from Frinde Maher and Abby Rockefeller, two *Ramparts* readers, commented: “Your article thrusts us back into the publicity-seeking, prostituting, beauty magazine scene that all radical women are seeking very hard to get out of.”¹²³ This observation underscored precisely what made the article such an overt example of how easy it was for “progressive,” radical, and socially active people to neutralize minorities—or in this case, women—in much the same way that the establishment did to radicals in general. Regardless of its perhaps ambiguous intentions, the article was an overt expression of how cooptation from within could function as a means of paying lip service to women’s activism, while continuing to relegate them to very specific roles; these roles were represented by fashion and a very specifically “attractive” and ultimately less important feminine activism. This sort of radical cooptation was a harbinger of the numerous splits and schisms that characterized activists organizations in the mid to late Sixties, as neutralized minorities within radical groups began their own fight against cooptation and against individuals and groups which, in many respects, believed they functioned in an egalitarian way.

Cooptation and neutralization presented a considerable challenge to radical and countercultural activists in the Sixties and Seventies, and what made it an even more difficult

¹²² “Letters,” *Ramparts*, vol 6, nos. 9 & 10 (May 1968), 4; Most of the letters to the editor printed in this May 1968 edition of *Ramparts*, were critical of the article and the magazine’s cover, which showed an image of a woman, photographed from the neck down, wearing a dress with a plunging neckline with a political campaign button. However, the second published letter, written by a woman claiming to be a national coordinator for the Women’s Liberation Movement, commented, “I wish to congratulate you on the magnificent spoof on Women Power in your February issue... Since most radical women are still exceedingly sensitive about their incipient and temerarious assault on the sacred cow of their inferiority, I’m sure that many will, mistakenly, take your article seriously...”

¹²³ Frinde Maher, Abby Rockefeller, “Letters,” *Ramparts*, vol 6, nos. 9 & 10 (May 1968), 4

challenge was how insidious or unintended the process could be. This challenge was something that gradually developed in scope over the years; some of its early iterations in both the New Left and the counterculture showed concern for how individuals in leadership roles could be coopted by mainstream politics by making political concessions, which led to the safeguard of decentralized leadership and short leadership terms. The SDS activist Casey Hayden outlined this concern in her 1964 article, “Raising the Question of Who Decides,” in which she posited that building and sustaining a radical movement required that “rotating leadership helps to halt leadership sellouts.”¹²⁴ There was indeed a gradual growth in the awareness of the power of the movement’s rhetoric to exploit from within as well, and once again, this historical discussion leads to the necessity of considering how active participation and the purity of radical individual experience became a powerful form of resistance against both establishment and movement cooptation and neutralization. The growth of television and visual media was indeed a key site for intentional establishment cooptation, though, again, this trend in the mainstream media could be linked to an unintentional trend more closely connected to alternative culture.

In April of 1968, the *Evergreen Review* published an article by Nat Hentoff that outlined the radical and countercultural preoccupation with the authenticity of “the experience.” In discussing this preoccupation, Hentoff pointed to the fundamental problems of active participation in a time of media saturation, and how even dissident and countercultural media threatened the sanctity of active participation. In his article “Turning the Camera Into the Audience,” Hentoff discussed the growing popularity of “cinéma vérité” documentary style

¹²⁴ Casey Hayden, “Raising the Question of Who Decides,” in *“Takin’ It To the Streets”: A Sixties Reader*, 3rd edition, eds. Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 68.

television. “Man, there’s hardly any place we can’t go to find out where other tribes are at... Want to hang with Dylan? Watch the new documentary that follows him around. Want to go along on a search and destroy mission? Turn on the 11 o’clock news,” he wrote, stressing the closing of space between individuals and events, or individuals and each-other. “If it’s involvement you’re after, you’ve got to see and hear,” he continued, quoting Marshall McLuhan. While television media provided a crucial accessibility to information through the experience of seeing and hearing, Hentoff noted how McLuhan “doesn’t account for how this saturation of images and sounds facilitates the illusion, but not the experience, of depth of involvement.” Hentoff’s article offered a crucial perspective on how media oversaturation, while offering important information, ultimately subdued viewers and blunted the potential for activism by giving the *illusion* of active participation and engagement in a viewed event or experience, while in reality, this sort of participation through media was deceptively passive, and could prevent any further engagement; “The ‘truth’ we ingest... is like the ‘truth’ we keep learning from all the media about the ghettos. It is inoperative. It may affect us transiently... but... it leaves us as we were,” he lamented, likening the experience of even this documentary style of visual media to the experience of mainstream news media which explicitly sought to challenge radical culture.¹²⁵

This idea and observation that Hentoff communicated in his article suggested just how formidable—and, at times, frighteningly unintentional—an opponent the establishment media and the underground media as well could be to the experience of radical culture that placed such importance on active engagement. Of course, this criticism of the media’s effect on participation and the illusion of engagement was far more complicated than simply declaring that by watching

¹²⁵ Nat Hentoff, “Turning the Camera Into the Audience,” *Evergreen Review*, vol 12, no. 53 (April 1968), 47, 80.

television instead of participating in an event, one was not “engaged.” The attitudes towards the Woodstock music festival and subsequent documentary are a prime example of this conundrum. While hundreds of thousands of people braved the weather and the traffic to go to this festival in the summer of 1969 at Max Yasgur’s sprawling dairy farm in upstate New York, there was a simple, undeniable fact that the festival simply could not accommodate every single person who wished to attend. People who watched Michael Wadleigh and Bob Maurice’s musical documentary of the festival came under great criticism from people who “were actually there,” because the experience simply could not be transmitted via film; “‘No one who as there will ever be the same’ was the theme of responsible and irresponsible journalism alike for weeks following,” read an article in *Ramparts*, lamenting the growth of “souvenirs” and salable Woodstock products.¹²⁶ The focus on participatory democracy, then, had some inherently exclusive contradictions, which, on the one hand, championed active participation as an antidote to cooptation, but on the other hand, did not account for how defining cultural experiences were not always accessible to all willing participants.

Whether they were an establishment tool to protect the status quo, or a means of repurposing establishment institutions for radical purposes, or an insidious and perhaps unintentional weapon wielded within dissident movements against its own participants, cooptation and neutralization were such overwhelmingly omnipresent facets of Sixties media and radicalism. Resistance to cooptation was equally as omnipresent, as it informed important reimaginings of establishment tropes, such as patriotism, as well as the ways in which it

¹²⁶ “Woodstock: The Four-Dollar Revolution,” *Ramparts*, vol 9, no. 4 (October 1970), 60; <http://www.unz.org/Pub/Ramparts-1970oct-00050?View=PDF> accessed October 23, 2014.

ultimately influenced nascent movements, such as second-wave feminism and radical feminism. The threat of cooptation was thus far more complex than the powerful of the establishment imposing on the powerless of dissident movements, and using the media to confound the image of radicals and countercultural activists. To consider cooptation in this way, as neither top-down, nor bottom-up, but as an all-encompassing and sometimes unintentional trend is important because it provides further context for just how difficult it was to try to forge and publicize an alternative culture; there were so many factors working to challenge or break down dissident culture, that identifying and wielding cooptation became one of the most viable means of defence against it.

The establishment attempts at neutralizing alternative movements were almost less threatening than unintentional cooptation and neutralization from within movements because they were more overt, and thus easier to name and identify. In identifying and resisting attempts at cooptation and neutralization, many dissidents encouraged active participation as a means of resisting establishment cooptation. This notion was indeed somewhat abstract, as it elevated the importance of the transience of individual experience and created a more authentic, participatory, radical community. However, dissidents' focus on active engagement and participation was threatened by what Abbie Hoffman called "culture vultures"—individuals or corporations who sought to profit from the countercultural or radical experience.¹²⁷ The *Woodstock* documentary was indeed singled out amongst cultural dissidents as a particularly heinous atrocity of removing the purity of experience and transmitting it second-hand through entertainment media. As Hentoff argued, such second-hand participation had the potential to blunt active engagement with

¹²⁷ Hoffman, *Woodstock Nation*, 108.

the illusion of active participation; it was ultimately this idea that defined the countercultural and dissident preoccupation with authenticity.

Constructing Radical Identity: Battles for Authenticity

“‘I’ve never met a Panther—this is a first for me!’” noted the journalist Tom Wolfe, quoting the New York City socialite Cheray Duchin at a 1970 fundraiser for the Black Panthers at Leonard and Felicia Bernstein’s fashionable apartment. “Christ, if the Panthers don’t know how to get it all together, as they say... the tight black turtlenecks... Cuban shades, Afros. But real Afros, not the ones that have been shaped and trimmed like a topiary hedge and sprayed until they have a sheen like acrylic wall-to-wall—but like funky, natural, scraggly... wild...”¹²⁸ Wolfe’s article about this fundraiser, titled “Radical Chic: That Party At Lenny’s,” appeared in *New York* magazine in June of 1970, and quickly became controversial and notorious for its discussion of wealthy celebrities and socialites who were basically, according to Wolfe, slumming and revelling in the sexy, fashionable appeal of radicalism. However, he argued, these socialites and celebrities, namely the Bernsteins, were unwilling to maintain such an attitude of radical support when they came under widespread public criticism from the Jewish community for supporting a group seen as antithetical to Jewish interests.¹²⁹ Noting the subsequent withdrawal of “radical chic” from the communities of the “culterati and liberal intellectuals,” Wolfe noted that “if the socialites already in line for Panther parties had gone ahead and given them in clear defiance of the opening round of attacks on the Panthers and the Bernsteins, they might well have struck an extraordinary counterblow on behalf of the Movement...” Like earlier discussions of cooptation and the adoption of radical style without radical substance, though,

¹²⁸ Tom Wolfe, “Radical Chic: That Party at Lenny’s,” *New York* (June 8, 1970), 1 [<http://nymag.com/news/features/46170/>; accessed November 4, 2014].

¹²⁹ Some prominent members of the Jewish community allegedly claimed that the Black Panthers supported Arabs against Israel; Wolfe, “Radical Chic,” 17.

Wolfe zeroed in on a well-intentioned phenomenon of the mainstreaming of radical culture, whose wealthy participants' financial support no doubt helped dissident movements and their programs, as well as their legal defence funds; just the day before the fundraiser, Wolfe noted, one of the Black Panthers had been arrested for "a most unusual charge called 'criminal facilitation.'" However benevolent their intentions, though, Wolfe concluded: "For the Radically chic to have fought back in this way would have been a violation of their innermost convictions. Radical chic, after all, is only radical in style."¹³⁰

"From the beginning, it was pointless to argue about the sincerity of Radical Chic," Wolfe insisted. "Unquestionably the basic impulse, 'red diaper' or otherwise—was sincere. On the other hand, one also has a sincere concern for maintaining a proper East Side lifestyle in NY society."¹³¹ This dichotomy indeed spelled the undoing of the romanticism of "radically chic" fundraisers for dissident groups, which had been held for *Ramparts* magazine, and GI coffee houses, to name a few.¹³² In the historical context, though, it is by no means pointless to argue about the sincerity of Radical Chic; this article was the culmination of a long and often intentional process of tensions in the mainstreaming of radical culture and the battle for authenticity. Dissidents' construction of radical identity in the Sixties, both publicly and privately, was a very self-conscious and deliberate process, which was inherently tied up with ideas of authenticity; what was authenticity in an age of media saturation and skewed depictions of individuals and groups? Whose actions were authentic and radically "pure"? These concerns were a major preoccupation amongst dissidents in the New Left and the counterculture and

¹³⁰ Tom Wolfe, "Radical Chic: That Party At Lenny's," *New York* (June 8, 1970), 1,

¹³¹ Wolfe, "Radical Chic," 9.

¹³² Wolfe, "Radical Chic," 10, 9.

anywhere in between, as individuals and groups struggled to forge a revolutionary and radical identity built on the purity of social, cultural, and political ideals—ideals of egalitarianism, of participatory democracy, of brother and sisterhood, of love, laughter, and life, of free society devoid of the leadership and the cult of personality, and most importantly, of truth. Individuals and groups recognized the obvious problems with these ideals as the building blocks of radical identity, though, which was that there was no agreed-upon way to identify and define any of them. Especially under the watchful eye of the media and the establishment and with an increasing awareness of the threat of cooptation, dissidents often attempted to construct and defend their own identity by identifying inauthenticity in others, who they often saw as movement interlopers.

There are a number of terms and ideas that have stood out in dissident writings that offer a sort of framework for considering this preoccupation with authenticity, and one key term that can be held in contrast to Wolfe's framework of "Radical Chic" was "hip radicalism." While Radical Chic was Wolfe's term for defining the unlikely but prevalent pairing of dissidence with trendiness, hip radicalism was ultimately used as a signifier for a radicalism that was "in" and trendy but that had not been coopted. Rock music, for example, was certainly popular and trendy, and absolutely had the potential to be coopted and used for profit, but it could still be an authentic expression of anti-establishment dissent and defence against "culture vultures." Though "hip radicalism" as a term does not come up in movement writings as much as other "hip" terms, such as hip capitalism and hip merchants, which yoked together a sort of anti-establishment, countercultural or radical attitude with distinctively capitalist, establishment

economic practices, its use was often in defence of radical culture against cooptation and against radical wannabes.

The *Woodstock* documentary, directed by Michael Wadleigh and released in theatres across America in March of 1970, was once again a telling example of how dissidents viewed the purity of their experience, and how dissidents in the entertainment industry were conflicted by ideas of hip capitalism. “The White Panthers and other hip radical groups have organized a boycott against the film on the grounds that it is a culture rip-off,” proclaimed the article in *Ramparts* magazine that noted how the tagline for the Woodstock festival and subsequent documentary was, “No one who was there will ever be the same.” However, the author continued, this tagline: “...is now they key line in the coordinated promotion of a variety of fallout products.”¹³³ Like Hoffman’s declarations against “Culture Vultures,” in which he demanded that establishment entertainment media officials pay reparations and an annual fee to “Woodstock Nation,” the festival increasingly became a commodity, rather than an experience.¹³⁴ “Woodstock Nation” was Hoffman's term for the cultural revolutionaries whose social and cultural understandings of the radical community were altered by the experience of the Woodstock festival, or whose countercultural experience was radicalized by police violence; these “hip radicals” were out to defend the sanctity of their radical culture, no matter how mainstream it might become.

The *Woodstock* documentary was indeed fertile ground for this battle, and it represented some of the major tensions between ideals and actions that characterized the struggle for defining

¹³³ “Woodstock: The Four-Dollar Revolution,” 60.

¹³⁴ Hoffman, *Woodstock Nation*, 108, 21.

authenticity. In an interview in *Evergreen Review*, director Michael Wadleigh and producer Bob Maurice were asked how they could reconcile producing a film that did not ultimately represent their own political views. Wadleigh responded,

The film we could have done... could have been very leftist, very pro the kids, pro drugs and the music and social change and long hair and nudity and new morals, and all that. We might have felt, as many filmmakers do, that we simply can't give voice to the other side, because there's too much voice for the other side already. But I think our motive was a little more moderate than that. Because what we really are is biased towards entertainment.¹³⁵

Wadleigh and Maurice were clearly conflicted about their ideals as dissidents and their success as media entertainment professionals; their articulation of their bias towards entertainment was a bold declaration to make when such heavy criticism about the simple existence of their documentary pervaded the radical and countercultural communities. However, even Wadleigh and Maurice were disturbed at the shape the advertising campaign took. Describing this campaign, Maurice noted that the major studio and distributor of the film, Warner Bros. “literally had a 50 year old guy imitate a 16 year old kid, saying things like ‘it's psychedelized my life,’ whatever that means. And I, who was there, will never be the same. Really, really, it's unbelievable [how they advertised it so inauthentically].”¹³⁶ There was clearly a stark contrast between Wadleigh and Maurice’s bias towards entertainment and their principled distaste for the way the studio advertised their documentary. Wadleigh and Maurice likely had no part in the creation of this advertising campaign, so it is understandable that they would feel as though their artistic vision had been compromised by this 50-year-old’s impersonation of a kid whose life had

¹³⁵ Kent Carroll, “Woodstock: An Interview with Michael Wadleigh and Bob Maurice,” *Evergreen Review*, vol 14, no. 81 (August 1970), 26.

¹³⁶ Carroll, “Woodstock: An Interview with Michael Wadleigh and Bob Maurice,” 29.

been changed by the festival. The issue, though, was just what Maurice had stated: he was there, and he would never be the same. Someone else who had not been there who was relaying this widely-felt sentiment was, according to Woodstock participants, sullyng the purity of their experience, and thus further threatening the authenticity of such events; participatory democracy and the value of first-hand experience, then, was in direct conflict with dissidents' ideals, as participation in events was often limited, as attendance at Woodstock was. Participatory democracy was thus inherently less democratic than the term implied, if any given event was not able to accommodate everyone who wanted to or could attend.

Though participatory democracy had its limitations, these limitations were perhaps necessary by radical and dissident standards; to entirely democratize an experience by welcoming reproductions would diminish that experience's purity and sense of experienced community, as Nat Hentoff had discussed in his article "Turning the Camera Into the Audience." Given dissidents' focus on the transience of the moment and the importance of first-hand participation, this was certainly an understandable position for many of them to have taken, especially given the pervasiveness of media cooptation. Claiming one's authenticity by first-hand participation, though, did not necessarily guarantee one's authentic radicalism. As the decade wore on, Sixties dissidents and underground journalists focused on this issue, evaluating others' authenticity, and often couching it in terms of "purity." John Lahr, for example, in "The End of the Underground," discussed how "The pill has unleashed sex from its bourgeois repressions; marijuana is in the suburbs and on the battlefields... As the targets seem to recede, so too does the purity of antagonism." Even though the late 1960s were years of growing militancy and firmer articulations of new radical identities, such as radical feminism, Lahr articulated this growing

fixation with authenticity as something that was increasingly slipping away from radical and dissident communities in favour of the trendier, more mainstream versions of coopted radicalism. The dissident antagonism towards perceived social ills was still there, he argued, but the mainstreaming of these issues—of sexuality, of drug use, and so on—made dissident action less pointed. “The Underground dies slowly. Old sights and sounds will linger; but the ruling romantic passion will have moved on,” Lahr concluded, pointing to Hoffman’s observation that “That’s what a movement does—it moves and if you are a part of a movement, you have to recognize that... you and your tactics have to change and at that very rapidly.”¹³⁷ With the coming of the “end” of the underground, Lahr argued that the movement was losing its ability to change, and thus its ability to remain authentic.

Much in the same way Carl Ogelsby and other New Left and countercultural activists pinpointed liberalism as the enemy of true—even pure—progress, the receding purity of antagonism that Lahr envisioned similarly halted the full realization of revolutionary ideas. The New Left’s critique of corporate liberalism suggested that liberal politics did *just enough* to make some changes without truly remedying underlying social ills, and caused individuals to acquiesce to political concessions. Lahr’s critique of the mainstreaming of revolutionary ideas and behaviour at once celebrated the headway made by dissident culture, while lamenting the unfulfilled realization of these issues’ full revolutionary potential. Since marijuana was in the suburbs, it was losing its power as a symbol of radical dissent. Therein lay the irony of radical authenticity: one could attempt to claim one’s radical authenticity by their participation in radical

¹³⁷ Lahr, “The End of the Underground,” 47, 34; Eric Foner, foreword to *For the Hell Of It: The Life and Times of Abbie Hoffman*, by Jonah Raskin (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), xviii.

culture, but that authenticity lost its potency as radical causes became more acceptable in mainstream society. The more people adopted aspects of radical culture, the more the edge of radical dissent was dulled.

As the Sixties wore on, and the style of radical culture became increasingly integrated into the mainstream, and as more people became involved with protest movements, dissidents became increasingly wary of others' claim to revolutionary purity. Even as SDS's ranks grew in the mid 1960s, within a few short years considerable factionalism became a major issue between the intellectualism of the "Old Guard" and the more countercultural tendencies of the "Prairie Power" new recruits.¹³⁸ The journalist Jack Newfield addressed the increasingly militant factionalism and fracturing of the SDS in his 1969 article in *Evergreen Review*, "SDS: From Port Huron to La Chinoise." The Weathermen were one of these factions, and though they took a firm, militant position against the Vietnam War and against racism, their militant advocacy for violence set the organization far apart from the SDS of earlier years. Newfield commented,

It is not 3 months since Mark Rudd and the Weatherman faction moved into the SDS national office, and every sign and portent I see indicates that SDS has become even more estranged from reality, even more sectarian, and even more caught up in proving its revolutionary purity, rather than organizing students around the real, felt discontents.¹³⁹

For Newfield, as with Lahr, the notion of purity was again a means of evaluating radical authenticity, though Newfield used it in a way that was much more critical of dissident thought and action. To Newfield, this need to prove authenticity and revolutionary purity had seemingly turned full circle to become less about dissident action and more about self-aggrandizement.

¹³⁸ Rebecca Klatch, *A Generation Divided: The New Left, The New Right, and the 1960s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 136.

¹³⁹ Jack Newfield, "SDS: From Port Huron to La Chinoise," *Evergreen Review*, vol 14, no. 73 (December 1969), 16.

Abe Peck, the editor of the countercultural, underground paper *The Seed*, expressed this sentiment too, from a Yippie standpoint. In his “Letter from the Editor” in the March 1968 edition, he commented on how the New Left had “reminded him of an axiom: ‘Beware those whose motives are pure.’” He criticized the New Left for their treatment of the Yippies in the planning for the Chicago DNC, stating that “The whole tone seems one of petulance, that the YIPs have sullied the purity of the Great Noble Revolution (SDS-owned-and-operated) by making the whole thing seem SILLY.”¹⁴⁰ This clash, in many ways, went back to the issue of understandings of culture versus politics, and this battle was taken into the realm of proving one’s authentic place in the radical community. “Purity,” in the context of these clashes and in the way Lahr used it, was conceived of both as an abstract way of defining a form of radicalism that was unadulterated by mainstream cooptation, and as a means of condemning others who claimed their form of radicalism as the most relevant to the constantly-changing social context. No one conception of authenticity was right or correct. That this battle for authenticity and “revolutionary purity” took on such a broad scope, though, points once again to how pervasive, and perhaps futile, proving one’s authenticity could be in a time of such rapid changes in the organization and characteristics of the New Left and the counterculture.

These rapid changes that took place in the New Left and the counterculture took place in mainstream culture’s adoption of dissident styles as well, as radicals’ appearance and fashion choices came under fire as an outward signifier of their ideology. For example, one major critique of the hippies from other, more “righteous” activists, was that they were created by the media and were, in fact, a mainstream, consumer-culture phenomenon; the historian Aniko

¹⁴⁰ Abe Peck, “Letter From the Editor,” *The Seed*, vol II no. 5 (March 1968), 2.

Bodroghkozy noted that, especially following the “‘Summer of Love’ media extravaganza television hippies began popping up all over prime time.”¹⁴¹ The Diggers in San Francisco were the most vocal group to identify and attempt to remedy this issue of “plastic hippies.”¹⁴² The Diggers were at the epicentre of the American hippie community, spreading their ethos of free society and street theatre out of the Haight-Ashbury, which has put them in very closer proximity to the hippies in many Sixties histories. Even before the massive influx of people into Haight-Ashbury during the 1967 Summer of Love, though, the Diggers addressed the growing issue of people using fashion as a signifier for radical identity. Zeroing in on countercultural rock bands, such as Big Brother and the Holding Company, the Grateful Dead, and Jefferson Airplane, the Diggers criticized those who profited from selling a cultural product, such as music. In one of their articles, published in the *Berkeley Barb* in November of 1966 titled “In Search Of A Frame,” they asked, “Where’s the revolution? Long-hair? Beautiful clothes? Would our soldiers be substantially different if we dressed them mod? John Wayne in Carnaby St. clothes,”¹⁴³ pointing to how fashion as a signifier for radicalism could so easily represent consumer culture and neutralized dissent.

While one of the Diggers’ publications did acknowledge the difficulty of trying to live an authentic “free” life in a society in which they were “still forced to be dependent on other people to freely give them space and resources,” this feeling of fashion as a false signifier for

¹⁴¹ Aniko Bodroghkozy, *Groove Tube: Sixties Television and the Youth Rebellion* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 81.

¹⁴² Metefsky, “Right On, Culture Freeks!” 10.

¹⁴³ “In Search Of A Frame,” *The Berkeley Barb*, (November 25, 1966) [<http://www.diggers.org/diggers/digart2.html>], accessed November 25, 2014.]

authenticity continued to grow.¹⁴⁴ In October of 1967, the Diggers held their “Death of Hippie” parade, in which they marched through the streets of the Haight-Ashbury with a coffin labeled “Hippie - Son of Media.” They filled the coffin with hippie regalia, such as beads and flowers, and sought to symbolically bury the dead concept of the “hippie” and replace it with the term “free man.”¹⁴⁵ In one of their self-published leaflets, “OCTOBER SIXTH NINETEEN HUNDRED AND SIXTY SEVEN,” the Diggers explicitly focused on how people who had adopted the “hippie” title and way of life had become countercultural tourists in the Haight-Ashbury. “Media created the hippie with your hungry consent,” they began. “The media cast nets, create bags for the identity-hungry to climb in.” The media, they claimed, had enabled the creation of an inauthentic identity for opportunistic movement interlopers. “The H/Ashbury was portioned to us by Media-Police and the tourists came to the Zoo to see the captive animals and we growled fiercely behind the bars we accepted and now we are no longer hippies and never were.”¹⁴⁶ The Diggers clearly felt as though they were living an authentically dissident lifestyle in the Haight-Ashbury, living as “free” as they could, avoiding becoming a mass media spectacle, avoiding the cult of leadership,¹⁴⁷ and publishing their own, community-driven “instantaneous leaflet paper.”¹⁴⁸ They acted out their claim to authenticity by defining themselves

¹⁴⁴ Free, “Mutants Commune,” *Berkeley Barb* (August 8, 1967) [www.diggers.org/diggers/mutants.html]; accessed November 22, 2014).

¹⁴⁵ Martin, *The Theatre Is In the Street*, 121; Bodroghkozy, *Groove Tube*, 92.

¹⁴⁶ “OCTOBER SIXTH NINETEEN HUNDRED AND SIXTY SEVEN,” *Free City News Sheets* (October 6, 1967) [http://diggers.org/free_city_news_sheets.htm]; accessed November 22, 2014]

¹⁴⁷ While the Diggers often claimed that they were a leaderless group, Emmet Grogan often acted as a sort of unofficial public figurehead of spokesperson for the Diggers, and he is often named in histories of the Diggers. In *Ramparts*’ “Social History of the Hippies,” it is his photo that appears in the article’s opening pages of photos, depicting the “Dramatis Personae” of the hippie movement.

¹⁴⁸ Art Kunkin, “San Francisco Faces the Hippies: Communication Co., Diggers Organize,” *Los Angeles Free Press* (March 31, 1967) [<http://www.diggers.org/diggers/digart4.html>]; accessed November 25, 2014].

as what hippies were *not*, and by defining themselves as radically authentic individuals who were aware of the countercultural identity that the media had created for fashionable dissidents. Their “Death of Hippie” parade was, in many ways, their own advertisement for their radical identity and their repudiation of the hippie identity.

This notion of opportunistic, identity-hungry individuals that the Diggers articulated was an idea that reached across mainstream and underground publications, and became a point of confusion for the mainstream media. *Time*, for example, was already understandably uncertain about the nuances of the countercultural community, conflating hippies with Yippies and Yippies with Diggers and Diggers with hippies, and so on and so forth; the term “hippie” was, to many, an umbrella term for this broad range of countercultural activists. However, when these different factions began battling for authentic identity in the radical community, the mainstream media once again unintentionally framed the story and their identities as absolutely connected. In “The Politics of YIP” in the April 5, 1968 issue of *Time*, the author noted—under the subheading of “Creeping Meatball”—that, “After a winter in which the hippie movement seemed so moribund that its own members staged a mock burial in honor of its death, the Yippies have suddenly invested it with new life through their special kind of antic political protest.”¹⁴⁹ There is a certain irony in this claim, which in many ways was a valid interpretation of the counterculture’s progression through 1967 and 1968. The irony, though, was that what the Death of Hippie march was ultimately about the hippie movement faltering in the face of media oversaturation and the media’s mishandling and selling of countercultural identity, which was what this article was ultimately doing in reporting on this event.

¹⁴⁹ “The Politics of YIP,” *Time*, vol 91, no. 14 (April 5, 1968), 61.

Selling identity through fashion was in fact what was happening in many mainstream and underground media accounts of the movement. This phenomenon was not just a cynical accusation by the Diggers. In Warren Hinckle's "Social History of the Hippies" in the March 1967 issue of *Ramparts*, he noted that "hip" merchants in the Haight-Ashbury sold expensive fashions and trinkets in stores that were "run by hippie merchants mostly for square customers, but that doesn't mean that hippies themselves aren't brand name conscious," calling them "frantic consumers."¹⁵⁰ This observation could certainly not speak for every self-professed hippie, but it is significant that Hinckle identified this trend in terms of being brand-name conscious, as Levi Strauss Denim became the unofficial brand of fashionable dissent in the mainstream. Hinckle received what appeared, at first, to be a particularly heartfelt letter following the publication of his article. R.S. Krohn wrote, "I have read your interesting commentary in March on the hippie scene and feel refreshed. Having been a self-styled exile from the Establishment during my college days at the University of Chicago in the '40s, but now dwelling inside a Brooks Brothers suit, I salute those hippies who practice what we could only preach." He then made an unusual request of Hinckle, asking him to make sure, in future issues of *Ramparts*, to capitalize "Levi's" when discussing the jeans, to make sure that the branding remain authentic to the company. Krohn, revealing in his signature that he was the manager of Levi's Public Relations Department, boasted that, "The wearing of our pants has been known to produce a mild degree of euphoria," claiming that they were worn by anyone from the Hell's Angels to the Royal Family in England. He then, however, firmly placed the brand in the counterculture with the following declaration: "In 1850, Mr. Levi Strauss came into the West and

¹⁵⁰ Hinckle, "The Social History of the Hippies," 20.

made the first pair of blue jeans. About 100 years later, LSD (Lysergic Acid Diethylamide) came along. We were first with LSD (Levi Strauss Denim).”¹⁵¹ Krohn clearly felt the need to claim the countercultural authenticity of the brand he represented, making the unlikely claim of these jeans’ connection to the counterculture’s drug of choice. One can only wonder why, of all the letters he was sure to have received in response to his article, Hinckle chose to publish this one which was so clearly an indirect advertisement for jeans. One distinct possibility, though, was that this response indeed proved his point that the hippie movement was influenced and infiltrated by these brand-name-conscious consumer capitalist ideas and products. Krohn explicitly stated how he was remiss at his inability to take part in the dissident culture of the Sixties because of his job, but he was nonetheless “hip” and authentic because of his connection to the “first,” original LSD. Much like Hentoff suggested in “Turning the Camera Into the Audience,” Krohn excused his lack of action by supporting “dissident” fashion.

Levi’s were indeed a regular fixture in discussions of hippie fashion, as a number of *Time* magazine reporters often donned this garb as a form of “hippie camouflage” while gathering information for their reports on the movement. In the July 7, 1967 issue of *Time*, in which Robert Jones’s “The Hippies” article appeared, the editor, James R. Shepley, wrote a declaration of hip authenticity in his “Letter From the Publisher.” “Most members of the *Time* staff consider themselves reasonably hip, but writing and reporting the hippie movement presented problems,” Shepley claimed. One of these problems was that Shepley’s reporters and researchers simply did not adequately *look* the part, and therefore had to disguise themselves as hippies by wearing,

¹⁵¹ R.S. Krohn, “Letter To the Editor,” *Ramparts*, vol 5, no. 11 (May 1967), 3.

among other things, Levi's.¹⁵² In the October 27, 1967 issue as well, Shepley sent reporters and researchers to cover the March on the Pentagon. "Some wore Levi's and suede boots, to meld more easily with the crowd."¹⁵³ While these reporters and researchers were not necessarily claiming to be authentic dissidents, these letters from Shepley indicated that he and his staff were nonetheless "hip" to the ways of dissent, believing that all they needed to bridge whatever gap remained was a pair of suede boots and some Levi's. What is significant about this sort of fashionable participation, though, is that they were, in fact, participating in the experiences of the radical community. That they felt the need to don hippie camouflage is a testament both to mainstream cooptation attempts, as well as the difficulty of defining and gauging one's dissident authenticity; not everyone who took part in a radical event was necessarily a dissident, which Jerry Rubin indeed found out the hard way when his bodyguard turned out to be an undercover agent. Participation and fashion were both, potentially, false signifiers of radical authenticity.

This sort of stylistic radicalism, though, was nonetheless an important, if problematic, part of advertising the movement in the underground press. An advertisement in *Ramparts* for the *Evergreen Review* contained a full-page, black and white photograph of four people against a plain grey-white backdrop. In the back stood a tall, young white man with shaggy hair and a full beard, wearing a jean jacket, a turtleneck, and playing a guitar. In front of him stood a young white woman with long, straight hair, wearing heavy, dark eye-makeup, a poncho, blue jeans, and leather boots, and gripping a microphone. To her left knelt a young black man, wearing dark sunglasses, a beret, a black turtleneck, dark pants, dark leather boots, and holding a video

¹⁵² James R. Shepley, "Letter From the Publisher," *Time*, vol 90, no. 1 (July 7, 1967), 10.

¹⁵³ James R. Shepley, "Letter From the Publisher," *Time*, vol 90, no. 17 (October 27, 1967), 23.

camera. To his right and to the right of the young woman knelt another young white man, with shaggy hair and a moustache, wearing a dark jacket, headphones, and holding sound recording equipment. Across the picture of these four stern, unsmiling people were two lines of text, reading “Guerrilla Warfare: New Strategy of the Underground.” The next page in this issue of *Ramparts* contained a full page of text discussing the revolutionary potential of the *Evergreen Review*. Citing Jack Newfield’s view of the New Left, the advertisement declared, “There’s a new scene on the New Left. The culture wing is taking over with a battle style all its own. Like a small band of guerrillas, they hit and run with slashing spontaneous poems, quick committed journalism, underground films, propaganda wrapped in folk-rock music, and savage satire unleashed from Off-Broadway launching sites.”¹⁵⁴ The advertisement, with its depictions of a cultural “new scene on the New Left,” was promoting dissident thought, and also what that thought typically—or stereotypically—looked like. The image and text made no direct reference to any sort of brand name, though it is important to consider the ways in which the New Left was also “branded” with a certain image in the media; *Time* magazine did not simply *create* these images and associations from nothing. While these activists were not targeted as a “media creation,” as “plastic hippies” were, the style of dissent was still used to appeal to dissident sensibilities in the readers of *Ramparts* and *Evergreen Review*.

The major issue with fashion as an outward signifier for dissidence in a media-saturated society is that it *was* a significant indicator of political and cultural dissent, as much as it was a consumer idea or a means of “hippie camouflage.” Thomas Frank discussed the mainstreaming

¹⁵⁴ *Evergreen Review*, “Guerrilla Warfare: New Strategy of the Underground,” advertisement, *Ramparts*, vol 5, no. 10 (April 1967), 54-55.

and creation of radical fashions in his book, *The Conquest of Cool*, focusing largely on how the “new advertising” of the 1960s looked for talent “among nonconformists, dissenters, and rebels.” “What distinguished the advertising of the 1960s,” argued Frank, “was its acknowledgement of and even sympathy with the mass society critique,” noting that a major paradox in this sort of mildly rebellious revolution in advertising was that it “offered to solve the problems consumerism created” by creating *more* consumption, but of new products or products infused with a nonconformist meaning.¹⁵⁵ It is difficult, then, to evaluate how dissidents defined their authenticity when signifiers of radical authenticity were so complexly tangled with products and images of radicalism, and when symbols of dissent were used to illustrate dissident style as an insincere, fashionable consumer choice. The cover of the issue of *New York Magazine* that contained Tom Wolfe’s “Radical Chic” article, for example, showed three well-coiffed white women, one young, one perhaps middle-aged, and one senior, wearing cocktail dresses, tasteful jewelry, and black leather gloves on their right hands. Their right hands were raised in the defiant fist of the Black Panthers.¹⁵⁶ For the Black Panthers, the black glove and raised fist was a legitimate symbol of defiance and Black Power. This *New York Magazine* cover was certainly meant to encapsulate Tom Wolfe’s argument of New York society’s infatuation with the style of radicalism, and such an image certainly captured his perceived insincerity of “Radical Chic.” To try to depict *authentic* radical style, then, was a seriously complex and difficult task for individuals and groups who felt they were indeed the authentic standard bearers of radicalism or dissident experience, as many Woodstock attendees did. Whether one’s appearance or fashion

¹⁵⁵ Frank, *The Conquest of Cool*, 54, 55.

¹⁵⁶ “Free Leonard Bernstein!” magazine cover image, *New York* (June 8, 1970).

choices were “authentic” became a moot point, though; the battle for authenticity became so muddled by media depictions of radicalism, but also by the evolution of the movement’s participants. A “hippie” in 1966 may have been an entirely different kind of “hippie” by 1968, much in the way the *Evergreen Review* boasted of growing tendencies of cultural, even countercultural, expression in the New Left. For example, SDS’s numbers swelled dramatically in the mid Sixties following their anti-draft demonstrations and the March on Washington in 1965. These new members differed greatly from the “Old Guard” in their approach to dissidence; Todd Gitlin referred to them as “proto-hippies,” as opposed to the more intellectual Old Guard.¹⁵⁷

This *Evergreen Review* advertisement indeed made claims to the counterculture from a more New Left perspective, and, curiously, its most explicit claim of countercultural style was in regards to women’s bodies and fashion. “In this issue,” it announced, “you’ll also find... a startling full-color photographic presentation of the new Ep (idermal) [*sic*] Art where the girls wear paint instead of mini-skirts.”¹⁵⁸ While in many ways this statement repudiated the “mini-skirt caucus” declaration of the Hinckles’ article about “Woman Power” in favour of a more creative, psychedelic experience of women’s bodies, feminist interpretations of women’s style, especially in hippie movements, felt neither of these approaches to be particularly empowering. The Lower East Side Women’s Liberation Collective noted that, in “hip culture,” there was extreme pressure on women to be thin and “properly dressed.” “Even though she doesn’t have to wear all those straight clothes she still has an image to maintain... Women who drop out of

¹⁵⁷ Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching*, 129.

¹⁵⁸ *Evergreen Review*, “Guerrilla Warfare,” advertisement, 56.

straight society must be prepared to buy a new wardrobe or they will not be accepted in hip society,” the Collective argued. “And if you wear anything over a size nine forget it!” they continued, citing how even Mama Cass, “rich, famous and creative...” almost killed herself by dieting.¹⁵⁹ These women pointed out how consumer culture was a pervasive part of movement culture, and believed that it was a specifically gendered phenomenon.

Though images of dissent did also depict decidedly male or unisex fashions, such as the men depicted in the *Evergreen Review* advertisement, or the Panther men *and* women that Wolfe described in “Radical Chic,” the Lower East Side Women’s Collective, as well as the Chicago-based activists Sue Munaker, Evelyn Goldfield, and Naomi Weisstein, drew an important parallel between mainstream and movement depictions of women and women’s fashion: they both carelessly catered to sexualized images of women’s bodies. Munaker, Goldfield, and Weisstein referenced how so many underground papers and publications from the “Movement Media” depicted women’s style in such a selective way; they noted how the image on the cover of *Ramparts* in which the “Woman Power” article appeared showed “a picture of a woman with two tits and no head. Several months later the cover sported a perky blonde dressed only in a flimsy black bra and panties to announce the important political subject of wire-tapping.”¹⁶⁰ Like cooptation from within the New left and countercultural movements, the discussions and depictions of radical women’s style within the movement, especially in this *Evergreen Review* advertisement, treated their sexuality and their bodies as their main claim to radical authenticity. Certainly many women did feel that choice and autonomy over one’s body was a significant part

¹⁵⁹ Lower East Side Women’s Liberation Collective, “Love Is Just A Four Letter Word,” 38.

¹⁶⁰ Goldfield, Munaker, and Weisstein, “A Woman Is A Sometime Thing,” 248.

of women's liberation. However, this advertisement's alternative to the mini skirt being to wear nothing but body paint suggested a conflation of women's sexuality with women's radicalism or empowerment.

According to Munaker, Goldfield, and Weisstein, movement media and advertising, like mainstream media and advertising, was created by men in a way that catered to specifically gendered stereotypes. Along similar lines, historian John McMillan wrote in his study of the underground press in the Sixties that many of the publications "mirrored the sexism and homophobia of the dominant culture."¹⁶¹ In the underground press, though, this particular brand of sexism, of focusing on women's fashion and sexuality above their politics, added another dimension to the fight for authenticity; as women, especially those active in the New Left, began to express their discontent at being the "shit-workers" of the movement, they drew on these issues of women's fashion and appearance as a means of discrediting the authenticity of New Left ideals of egalitarianism. It is no wonder that a pejorative term for women's activists became "bra-burning feminist," drawing on this politically-charged women's garment, which, incidentally, women did *not* burn at the 1968 Miss America Pageant in Atlantic City, as myth would have it.¹⁶²

¹⁶¹ John Campbell McMillan, *Smoking Typewriters: The Sixties Underground Press and the Rise of Alternative Media in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 11.

¹⁶² One of the major myth of the "misremembered Sixties" is this notion of women burning their bras. Some women may have indeed burned their bras at one time or another, but this reference was typically about the 1968 Miss America pageant, during which a number of feminist activists, including the radical feminist Robin Morgan, threatened to burn their bras and other female items such as false eyelashes outside of the pageant. However, they respected the city's wish that they not set fire to anything, as there was a concern about the boardwalk presenting a fire hazard. The journalist Jennifer Lee's 2014 article in *Time*, "Feminism Has a Bra-Burning Myth Problem," is one of many media accounts to discuss this discrepancy between popular myth and reality; Jennifer Lee, "Feminism Has a Bra-Burning Myth Problem," *Time*, online issue (June 12, 2014) [<http://time.com/2853184/feminism-has-a-bra-burning-myth-problem/>; accessed April 6, 2015].

The issue of discrimination against women within the New Left and countercultural movements can again be seen as an unintended consequence of entrenched social practices and the pervasive nature of sexist or sexually-focused language and images. Again, though, regardless of intention, women who began to move towards feminist activism engaged in the battle for authentic identity. This battle often took the shape of discussing not just their position as second-class citizens in society at large, but their hypocritical treatment within movement culture. Finding this sort of treatment particularly offensive, the radical feminist Robin Morgan declared movement women's authenticity after she and other feminist activists took over the underground newspaper *Rat* and published an all-women's issue. In her famous article, "Goodbye To All That," she argued that "a legitimate revolution must be by, *made* by those who have been most oppressed," which she stated were racial-minority and white women. Her declaration of this gendered authenticity of the oppressed was explicit and scathing: "Goodbye, goodbye forever, counterfeit Left, counterleft, male-dominated cracked-glass mirror reflection of the Amerikan Nightmare. Women are the real Left."¹⁶³

As women began to more explicitly and fervently articulate their belief in their authentic place in movement politics and culture, male activists began to question their sense of egalitarianism, and it was language and word choice that often symbolized this struggle. Sociologist Rebecca Klatch's study of the New Left and the New Right in the 1960s focused heavily on how women imagined their social status in society and within these movements.

¹⁶³ Robin Morgan, "Goodbye to All That," in *Dear Sisters: Dispatches From the Women's Liberation Movement*, eds. Rosalyn Fraad Baxandall and Linda Gordon (Basic Books: 2000), 57 [<https://books.google.ca/books?id=2uMwEGfAMSQC&pg=PA53&dq=robin+morgan+goodbye+to+all+that&hl=en&sa=X&ei=jERyVarcBZKlyAS15YPoCA&ved=0CBwQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=robin%20morgan%20goodbye%20to%20all%20that&f=false>; accessed May 29, 2015]

Observing that many women did not necessarily feel as though they were oppressed in these movements, she suggested that one basic reason why was that women simply lacked the proper language of sexism. “I didn’t have a word for it,” one woman told her.¹⁶⁴ Language was a significant topic in movement literature and ideas, and word choice became a major outward indicator of one’s growing feminist consciousness. Prominent activists such as Abbie Hoffman and Tom Hayden both gradually expressed dismay at how they had treated or spoken about female activists, and it is interesting to note the progression in Hoffman’s writings about the language he used to express this awareness. In *Woodstock Nation*, published in 1969, Hoffman listed all of the things he had done since the Chicago DNC in 1968. Among various events, such as Woodstock, and activities like doing drugs, he said that he also took out the garbage and helped paint the apartment. He drew specific attention to these domestic tasks, urging that “Women’s Lib take note in case you get pissed later when I use the word ‘chick.’”¹⁶⁵ In an introduction to a reprint of *Revolution For the Hell Of It*, republished just one year later in 1970, he wrote that “Women’s liberation, more than any other movement to emerge in the last two years, forces us to examine our style of living... To have a revolution in our lifetime, male supremacy must be smashed (including the chauvinism in this book).” What was most significant about this declaration was his proposal for how to begin to smash male supremacy: “The word ‘chick’ and ‘fag’ and the deep-rooted attitudes they imply must be purged from the New Nation.”¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁴ Klatch, *A Generation Divided*, 180.

¹⁶⁵ Hoffman, *Revolution For the Hell Of It*, 11.

¹⁶⁶ Hoffman, *Revolution For the Hell Of It*, 3.

This stark contrast of his use of the word “chick” suggests how powerfully language and word choice could function in sustaining oppressive cultural norms; his use of the term “white nigger” to describe himself and his fellow radical long-hairs perhaps more explicitly illustrates this point, as he drew on the language of oppression to try to stake his claim as a true revolutionary. It is interesting, then, that he sought to claim this word, “nigger,” but to purge the words “chick” and “fag” from a new, egalitarian society. Perhaps it was simply because he, personally, could not begin to identify with being a “chick” or a “fag.” Hoffman has often been criticized for his machismo or chauvinism, as Robin Morgan so plainly declared in her essay: “Goodbye to his hypocritical double standard that reeks through the tattered charm.”¹⁶⁷ Regardless of which words Hoffman chose to claim or purge, though, the significance and evolution of the word “nigger” was not lost on white or black movement radicals, as they gradually became more and more fixated on language as both a marker of radical authenticity, and as a means to confound mainstream media and the establishment.

In a long poetry-prose stream-of-consciousness titled “Mutants Commune,” members of the Diggers collective drew on the necessity of changing language. “Break out of mental institutions..... [*sic*] language systems... Decentralize language—each community should have a language that is continually and rapidly fluxing.” They then defined “Mutation” as “change under threat of extinction.”¹⁶⁸ This notion of changing language systems was, in some ways, a means of trying to preserve authenticity and promote independent thought and interpretation, much in the same way that avoiding having a leader was supposed to be a safeguard against

¹⁶⁷ Morgan, “Goodbye To All That,” 54.

¹⁶⁸ Free, “Mutants Commune.”

cooptation and concession-granting. However, this idea of a language constantly in flux ultimately led back to concerns about asserting an authentic radical identity that could not be easily understood or coopted by the mainstream.

Time writers and reporters indeed fancied themselves “reasonably hip,” though they were certainly the kind of mainstream news outlet that the Diggers sought to confound with their “rapidly fluxing” language. These writers and reporters, though, were not necessarily confounded by “hip” language or fluxing word choices, and they expressed a great deal of pride in having identified youth and hippie culture’s “language bag” as an anti-establishment weapon. In the “Man of the Year” article from early 1967 about “The Inheritors,” Robert Jones noted that when “The Inheritor”—his term for the pampered, idealistic youth of the Sixties—would go “on the offensive,” presumably against the establishment and mainstream society, they would “break out” a number of language tools which he identified as “the put-on,” “the gross-out,” and “the In-Talk.” The first two, he declared, were part of their language bag, “a constantly changing lingo brewed from psychological jargon, show-biz slang, and post-Chatterly obscenity.” “In-Talk,” though, was marked by its ambiguity, being “a reflection of youth’s determination to avoid self-definition even in conversation.”¹⁶⁹ Even in Jones’ 1967 coverage of “The Hippies” a few months later, he mused that “perhaps the most striking thing about the hippie phenomenon is the way it has touched the imagination of the ‘straight’ society that gave it birth. Hippie slang has already entered common usage and spiced American humor.”¹⁷⁰ Establishment media outlets such as *Time* were clearly more intrigued than bemused by this movement use of language.

¹⁶⁹ Jones, “The Inheritor,” 22.

¹⁷⁰ Jones, “The Hippies,” 18.

Though Jones himself acknowledged that it was “constantly changing” jargon, he suggested that this phenomenon was not so much a successful tool for avoiding self-definition, and thus cooptation, but rather a means of furthering the mainstream fascination with youth culture as a trendy commodity; “hip lingo” was just another tool that the *mainstream* media could use to sell dissident culture.

The change of tone between Jones’s two articles—the first being more concerned about the aspirations and behaviours of Sixties youth, and the second presenting hippie youth as lovable losers—suggests that even he imagined the threat of dissident culture to be subsiding as the Summer of Love became a bigger cultural phenomenon. The Diggers’ Death of Hippie parade in the fall of 1967 was also a response to this mainstreaming of dissident hippie culture, and they, too, focused largely on language as a way of expressing their defiance towards cooptation. It is both difficult and significant to imagine how this countercultural activist group believed they could change behaviour and attitudes by symbolically burying one descriptive word and replacing it with another, though, as so many other movement activists attempted through the late Sixties and into the early Seventies. “Diggers lacked the women’s liberation movement’s subsequent insights about the role of language in sustaining patriarchy,” suggested the historian Bradford Martin, noting their frequent use of the word “chick.” They clearly had an obvious awareness of the importance of language in sustaining the status quo; they just had not applied this understanding to feminist consciousness and patriarchal criticisms of society. Rather than this very self-conscious use of terminology being a way to avoid definition by the media, then, it was in fact a way of publicly defining what they were not; they were not “hippies,” they were “free men” (but not “free women”). By drawing attention to terminology in this way—by

essentially holding a funeral for a word that had been tarnished and tainted by consumerism—the Diggers became an important part of this attempt to fight cooptation through very deliberate self-definition. Jones was mistaken in his theory that language was a means of avoiding this kind of self-definition, though. Like cooptation in reverse, attempting to change the political and cultural significance of a word became a process of “anti-definition,” or defining oneself against another term; “Free man” would not have the same significance as a term if it were not created in contrast to “hippie.”

A number of activists from the Sixties drew on this evolution of language and altered use of words to symbolize larger changes in radical culture and identity, as an awareness of the potency of words became a major focus in movement literature. In 1970 and 1971, Tom Hayden, Jerry Rubin, Abbie Hoffman, and Paul Krassner all published reflections and commentaries on their experiences of the 1960s. Curiously in these two years, all of them, especially Hayden, Rubin, and Hoffman, reflected on how language was a tool of oppression when wielded by the establishment or used to support the status quo, but a tool of dissident liberation when altered by radicals. For example, Hoffman, as earlier discussed, had noted the significance of the words “chick” and “fag” as words imbued with practices of oppression and attitudes of inequality in mainstream and movement culture. In “The Trial,” much of which *Ramparts* published as its July 1970 issue, Tom Hayden offered a scathing critique of how language in the status quo had lost its true meaning and purity. “The language of the Establishment is mutilated by hypocrisy,” Hayden argued. “When ‘love’ is used in advertising, ‘peace’ in foreign policy, ‘freedom’ in private enterprise, then these words have been stolen from their humanist origins, and new words become vital for the identity of people seeking to remake themselves and society.” Like

Hoffman, who sought alternatives for “chick” and “fag,” Hayden suggested more militant and racial terms: “Negroes become ‘blacks,’ blacks become ‘Panthers,’ the oppressors become ‘pigs’ ... New language becomes a weapon of the Movement because it is mysterious, threatening to conventional power: We’re gonna off the pig’...”¹⁷¹ Hayden calling new language a mysterious and threatening “weapon of the Movement” related largely to the “new language bag” Jones had discussed in his articles in *Time* in 1967. Jones, however, failed to discuss how this “new language” was representative of a growing militancy of dissident attitudes, and focused instead on how the counterculture was simply tossing around terms to try to confound generational elders.

The ultimate issue in these discussions of language in the late Sixties and early Seventies was centred on whether language was indeed a threatening tool, or if it was simply this generation’s cultural slang, as Jones had suggested. This growing militancy may have been lost on Jones partly as a conscious editorial choice—perhaps he did not want to fan the flames of growing unrest in the movement, but also perhaps because of how openly dissident style and language was making its way into the mainstream. Coinciding with Hayden’s articulation of this evolution of language as a threatening tool that could be wielded by dissidents against status quo society, *Evergreen Review* published a cartoon in January 1970 that implied another interpretation. Like Jones, it suggested a sort of frivolity and political-correctness, rather than a cultural weapon. This cartoon depicted a white man and a white woman sitting at a bar next to a black man, casually sitting, and wearing a suit. The caption read: “Pardon me, sir, my wife and I

¹⁷¹ Hayden, “The Trial,” 23.

would like to know if you're black, Afro-American, or just plain Negro.”¹⁷² This cartoon’s message was that the average American was perhaps aware of these shifts in language, but that they simply wondered how they should apply them in the most politically correct way so as to not offend people who, in this case, identified with different culturally significant racial terms.

While there was a certain air of political correctness in this shifting racial terminology, it was nonetheless a major indicator of growing militancy in radical movements. In “Radical Chic,” Wolfe noted about the Panthers’ style that “These are no civil rights negroes, wearing grey suits three sizes too big.”¹⁷³ Wolfe clearly made the distinction between the militancy of the Black Panthers and the more calculated, perhaps non-violent civil disobedience and protest efforts of the earlier days of civil rights—though he was also perhaps referring more explicitly to the more liberal-political NAACP. Nat Hentoff, too, in an article in the June 1969 edition of *Evergreen Review*, “A Generation Without A Future,” pointed out the importance of these different terms. In discussing the glaring racial gaps in white and minority draft board members, he cited a Washington University study of a local draft board that found that only 1.3% of its members were black, “and as young blacks use the term today, most of those are probably Negro.”¹⁷⁴ The tone of the racial terms used by Wolfe and Hentoff were very different; Wolfe’s was an almost mocking way to describe unfashionable, unhip black men, and Hentoff’s was a reference to blacks who were perhaps not radically-minded. Yet they nonetheless implied the same thing: how one chose descriptive words was a socially and culturally relevant process. As Paul Krassner, the editor of the satirical underground paper *The Realist*, stated in his 1971

¹⁷² *Evergreen Review*, Cartoon, vol 14, no. 74 (January 1970), 60.

¹⁷³ Wolfe, “Radical Chic,” 2.

¹⁷⁴ Nat Hentoff, “A Generation Without A Future,” *Evergreen Review*, vol 13, no. 67 (June 1969), 47.

collection of essays, “As the levels of confrontation have intensified, so have the semantics gone through changes.”¹⁷⁵ What was significant about all of these statements about language, though, was that there simply *was* such a consciousness about how language represented so many shifts in the movement. Like growing consciousness in the fight for radical authenticity—whether by women, or racial groups, or simply the splitting factions in the New Left—the growing focus on how to both choose and forge the most significant word was an important way to articulate the most current and relevant radical identity.

This focus on word choice and semantics was indeed a major part of movement culture and movement articulations of radical identity. It was ultimately this discussion of racial terminology, though, that was perhaps the most obvious significant example of how word choice and loaded terminology shifted, and also how word choice could be used to implicitly convey a certain message. One major criticism from within the New Left and the Civil Rights and Black Power movements was that liberal politics had granted some concessions to subjugated peoples, such as the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts, but that these politics ultimately fell short of any real, fundamental change that would create a more egalitarian society. In examining literature from the mainstream press in the 1960s, even in accounts that may appear to offer a fair narrative of a group or an event, examining word choice often reveals a more ominous message about chauvinistic language and how it could be almost subliminally sustained. In 1965, *Time* magazine published an article, “Inside Snick,” about the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee. The author announced that “No civil rights group puzzles the US press more than the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the young militants who go by the

¹⁷⁵ Krassner, *How A Satirical Editor Became A Yippie Conspirator In Ten Easy Years*, 10.

acronym ‘Snick,’” noting that, “While some commentators applaud Snick's success in helping Negroes on a grass-roots level, others fret that Snick is being infiltrated by extremists and communists.”¹⁷⁶ Aside from ringing the ever-feared Cold War communism alarm, the article offered a relatively balanced narrative of SNCC. However, it referenced an article in which someone had delved deeper into the inner workings of the group than “anyone to date,” noting that, in this article, they were referred to as “Snickers,” which was what they were called by southern cops.¹⁷⁷ Following this explanation of this other article about SNCC and what they had been called by southern cops, though, the author continued to call these “young militants” “Snickers” throughout the rest of his piece.

This use of the term “Snickers” in this article was a strange editorial choice; it was ultimately *more* puzzling to both the press and the public than if the article were to refer to SNCC activists as they referred to themselves, rather than referring to them by the name they were called by southern cops. It is absolutely no secret that southern cops were often the sworn enemies of black civil rights activists, so it is relevant to consider why the author of this article chose to use this term, and what purpose it may have served in reporting about this organization. Whether or not the term “Snickers” was indeed solely a southern cops’ term, the author explicitly defined it as such, which prefaced its use throughout the rest of the article. Using this term may have just been a careless oversight, which failed to see how it created an explicit connection between this term and oppositional attitudes towards civil rights protestors.

¹⁷⁶ “Inside Snick,” *Time*, vol 85, no. 18 (April 30, 1965), 73

¹⁷⁷ “Inside Snick,” 73.

Strangely, *Time* magazine indeed saw itself as something of a mainstream, brave champion of fair racial reporting. *Time*'s publisher, Bernard M. Auer, was very careful to stress just how reliable *Time* was for its reporting on US race relations. Just a month before this issue with the article about SNCC was published, *Time* released an issue with Martin Luther King Jr. on the cover. In this issue's "Letter From the Publisher," Auer discussed an article the magazine had published in its first issue 42 years earlier about the Negro National Education Conference, stating that, "It is rather a matter of pride with us that since that first story we have devoted intense effort to studying, reporting on, and analyzing the American Negro's struggle for equality." He continued, discussing how when they first quoted Martin Luther King Jr. in the magazine in 1956, the magazine received 2500 letters, "half of them criticizing our judgement, but all showing the intense interest and involvement *Time* readers feel in the issue of race relations."¹⁷⁸ With this article about SNCC, *Time* was likely intending to simply report on an important and "puzzling" civil rights organization to its readers who, evidently showed "intense interest and involvement" in the topic. Regardless of the author's intention, though, this article's word choice betrayed an underlying tone of suspicion and opposition towards "Snickers" which it very subtly conveyed to its wide readership base.

This tone of suspicion and opposition that this article almost subliminally communicated is very closely tied to an idea that Jerry Rubin had about language and its subliminal uses in the Sixties. In an article in the 1969 issue of *Ramparts*, "Inside the Great Pigasus Plot," Rubin suggested that certain words had a Pavlovian effect in mainstream American culture in the Sixties. Referring to the scientist Ivan Pavlov and his experiments in conditioning, in which

¹⁷⁸ Bernard M, Auer, "Letter From the Publisher," *Time*, vol 85, no.12 (March 19, 1965), 21.

Pavlov trained a dog to salivate every time he rang a bell, Rubin wrote, “Aided by thousands of mercenary psychologists from the universities, Madison Avenue got the American people to salivate whenever they heard the bell: Communism. *‘The Negro people have been given a raw deal for centuries, but the Communists are using the civil rights movement, so we got to stop them.’*” He applied the same sort of satirical tone to the attitude that the Vietnamese were “better dead than red.” “The politician hits the bell, and the American people slobber all over their red-white-and-blue bowties.” Into the 1960s, though, he noted that “A beautiful thing happened: Children were born. Children were born who get no bad vibes when we hear the name ‘Stalin.’ We get sexually aroused at the mention of revolution...” During the Chicago Seven trial, though, Rubin believed that “The government is frantic to find the *word* to make the American people drool again.” He argued that “The most popular one now is *conspiracy*,” discussing how he and his fellow defendants were arrested for “*conspiring* to cross state lines and eat suckling pig in Chicago.”¹⁷⁹

Although Rubin was basically offering his own definition for “semiotics” or “semantics,” his thoughts on how words could become socially constructed as tools against one’s ideological enemy offer an interesting suggestion for how to scrutinize this time period and its catch-phrases. The *Time* article about SNCC, as previously mentioned, “hit the bell” by suggesting the link between civil rights activists and communists, which was indeed a serious concern amongst many opponents of the movement, as well as movement activists who did not want to be too closely associated with communist organizations. The word “Snickers” certainly did not have the ideological scope that “communism” did, which was perhaps why its use was even more

¹⁷⁹ Rubin, “Inside the Great Pigasus Plot,” 16.

insidious; again, regardless of this article's intention, it created an association of the word "Snickers" with these activists' southern cop opponents. If a reader knew nothing about SNCC before he or she read this article, he or she may have continued to use this southern cops' word to describe the organization's members.

What Rubin's discussion of semantics suggests, though, is that definitions and associations could, potentially, be just as easily broken down as they could be created. His observations about children being born who "get no bad vibes when they hear the word 'Stalin'" spoke—perhaps not entirely accurately—to the generational divide that characterized the youth movement of the Sixties, and how time and context had the potential to drastically alter the emotional feelings that words carried. Just like words such as "communism" and "conspiracy" could be used against movement radicals, then, Sixties dissidents' "language bag" was used amongst movement activists as a generational antidote to establishment language attacks. Being charged as "conspiracists" at the Chicago Seven trial was indeed a serious allegation, though Rubin defined his understanding of "conspiracy" as something that defined the youth movement's proudest and most liberating aspects. "According to Yippie semanticists, 'conspiracy' comes from the Latin root meaning 'to breathe together... The seriousness of the felony mounts as more people start breathing together at the same time in the same place," he argued. Using the word's Latin root, Rubin recast "conspiracy" to "include everybody possessed by the spirit of freedom," including Elvis Presley, Marilyn Monroe, and even fictional characters like Holden Caulfield.¹⁸⁰ Tom Hayden suggested that "...one of the first tasks of those creating a new society is creating a new and distinct identity... [T]hrough years or generations, it contains

¹⁸⁰ Rubin, "Inside the Great Pigasus Plot," 16.

its own bodies of experience, its styles and habits, and a common language becomes part of the new identity. The old language is depleted.”¹⁸¹ The focus on language in dissident culture was thus a crucial aspect in forging a new identity of a community of “conspirators” who “breathed together.”

Any discussion of individual or group identity is bound to tend towards the abstract, as it is not an objective quality. This abstraction was precisely what these movement activists were concerned about when they attempted to define what radical authenticity meant for themselves—but especially when they attempted to define what radical authenticity meant for others. By discussing how others’ motivations or fashion styles or language marked them as impure or as “tourists” who were not committed to the dissident or countercultural way of life, socially-conscious individuals could buttress their own revolutionary purity. Like in Michael Wadleigh and Bob Maurice’s *Woodstock* interview, there was a serious but conflicted back-and-forth between attempts at defining authenticity for oneself—as having *attended* Woodstock, but having made a mainstream reproduction of the festival—and attempts at breaking down the authenticity of others who had not been there. Because of the problems of cooptation from within and outside of the movement, outward signifiers of authenticity, such as fashion, became misleading or even damaging to how radicals attempted to construct their radical identity. At the same time, though, these outward signifiers were important parts of radical culture regardless of how mainstream they became, or how they were interpreted or reimagined by outside forces and movement “purists.” Whether or not “underground culture gradually became [the] nation’s most definable sights and sounds,” it is relevant to consider *why* these underground or radical styles

¹⁸¹ Hayden, “The Trial,” 23.

and language are so recognizable. Part of the answer is the power of cooptation and the mainstream media to publicize cultural phenomena, but part of the answer is also that dissident culture in these years was such a powerful presence in the greater culture of the Sixties.

In *A Generation Divided*, Rebecca Klatch addressed this complicated interplay between the power of the mainstream media and the power of dissident youth movements as being wildly out of balance between youth on the Left and youth on the Right. She noted that leftist activists, in their almost vicious and unyielding commitment to social change and radical authenticity, simply could not sustain their radical fight into subsequent decades in the same way that they had in the Sixties; activists of the New Left “paid a toll for their radicalization,” having thrown themselves into the radical lifestyle so fully.¹⁸² Though she dispelled the “Big Chill myth” about activism disappearing from these radicals’ lives,¹⁸³ she did give special attention to how women carried the “Sixties tradition” into the 1970s. She did note that transitioning into “regular life,” as the youth of the 1960s became adults, was difficult, especially as wider cultural fascination with rebellion receded and family and financial responsibilities became a bigger reality.¹⁸⁴ In 1986, long after the heyday of the Yippies and after Jerry Rubin had become a Wall Street banker and after Hoffman had spent most of the Seventies living as a fugitive, these two old friends took part in a debate, “Yippie vs. Yuppie.” Hoffman declared, “I still have not been ‘Big Chilled... But we are faced with the problems of the economic squeeze. The Eighties are different than the

¹⁸² Klatch, *A Generation Divided*, 278.

¹⁸³ “The Big Chill Myth” is a reference to the 1983 film, *The Big Chill*, directed by Lawrence Kasdan. The film portrayed a group of friends in the Eighties who were once a close-knit, socially or radically-conscious community, that had become disillusioned, cynical, and focused on money. “The Big Chill Myth” holds that Sixties activism was not sustained beyond the heyday of the New Left and the counterculture.

¹⁸⁴ Klatch, *A Generation Divided*, 328.

Sixties... How do we grow old, how do we mellow, without eating our soul with a shovel?"¹⁸⁵

Though Hoffman was speaking fifteen to twenty years after the fracturing of the New Left, he invoked an important preoccupation that had begun to permeate movement literature; amidst the fights against cooptation, and the cooptation within movements, and the battles for authenticity and desires to define radical identity, radicals and dissidents began to seek ways to remedy the practical and emotional strains of the radical lifestyle.

¹⁸⁵ Abbie Hoffman in "Yippie vs. Yuppie," online video (1986), 0:23:00 [http://ubu.com/film/hoffman_yippie.html]; Accessed April 30, 2015].

Exploring Inner Space: The Sustainability of the Radical Lifestyle

In a 1968 article in the countercultural underground paper *The Seed*, published in Chicago, the prominent radio personality Bob Fass claimed that “a yippie was a hippie who had been hit on the head with a nightstick,” a sentiment echoed in Abbie Hoffman's 1969 article in the *Evergreen Review*, “Thorns of the Flower Children.” “The gentle generation isn't gentle anymore,” he claimed, arguing that the “millions of kids [who] made the trip [to San Francisco] with flowers in their hair” were becoming politicized by violence and receptive to a growing militancy in activist culture.¹⁸⁶ There was a similar trend in activist literature from the New Left in the Sixties that showed a great preoccupation with how to create a culture of radicalism that was both effective and relevant, but that could most importantly nurture the radical individual. By the end of the decade, there was a noticeable militancy in radical and countercultural writings and actions, but it was tempered by a growing realization that the radical and countercultural lifestyle came with a heavy emotional toll. There was no one consensus about how to organize effectively or how to act in a revolutionary movement, especially with the added pressure of cooptation; as the years wore on, revolutionary methods—whether to “drop out,” or to protest in the streets, or to seek legislative action—gradually lost their earlier idealism. This breakdown in dissident approaches, though, ultimately became about the sustainability and authenticity of the radical lifestyle, as activists struggled with how to manage the long-term demands of radical action and the emotional traumas of the war and oppressive movement culture.

¹⁸⁶ Al Rosenfeld, “Upfront,” *The Seed*, vol II, no. 6 (1968), 2; Abbie Hoffman, “Thorns of the Flower Children,” *Evergreen Review*, vol 13, no. 73 (December 1969), 21.

Though this emotional preoccupation with the traumas of the radical lifestyle and the Sixties experience was a more prominent facet of the later, more militant years of the Sixties, it had evolved from much earlier, more idealistic notions of the radical potential of the human spirit. Self-betterment and self-examination in the New Left was a major manifestation of the ideas Paul Goodman articulated in *Growing Up Absurd*, which seemed to anticipate the challenges activists would face from mainstream cooptation and pressures to make political concessions. Goodman discussed the importance of the human community and human connections, and how this sort of relationship had been worked-out of the socialization process of youth—specifically male youth. Using the education system and the suburbs as some examples of the seclusion and loss of engaged community, he argued that they created a culture of disengagement and a "fatal emptiness." This "fatal emptiness" of one's environment discouraged creativity and defined "being a social animal" as "harmoniously belonging."¹⁸⁷

"Harmoniously belonging," then, meant not having any dissident opinions, for fear of further social alienation. The Port Huron Statement, written in 1962, acknowledged this loss and neglect of the "personal cultivation of the mind," but noted that "students are breaking the crust of apathy and overcoming the inner alienation that remains."¹⁸⁸ Being the founding document of SDS, and in some ways, of the American New Left, The Port Huron Statement made far-reaching claims about how lifestyle choice and self-exploration were a means to intellectually engage with and break the cycle of a socially constructed status quo; "A New Left must transform modern complexities into issues that can be understood and felt up close by every

¹⁸⁷ Goodman, *Growing Up Absurd*, 115, 8.

¹⁸⁸ "The Port Huron Statement," 56.

human being,” the statement’s author wrote, urging that students in universities must become the new, intellectual vanguard of the revolution.¹⁸⁹

As the New Left and dissident culture began to grow in scope and numbers, this sentiment about the emotional, human element of the radical community became increasingly tied to how to create an effective culture of resistance that did not alienate others from imagining a new society. Edward M. Keating, the founder of *Ramparts*, acknowledged the self-conscious shift the magazine was taking from a Catholic cultural publication to one more in step with leftist Sixties social movements’ ideals. In his “Statement From the Publisher” from October 1964, he discussed the magazine's Catholic founding in 1961, but stated his desire to move the magazine beyond this title; he discussed how hundreds of publications had “failed to bring people together in brotherhood and have furthered the ghettoization of people into titles,” such as “Christian,” or “white,” or “black.” He was explicitly referring to the exclusiveness of labelling the magazine as “Catholic,” and to the desire to “speak less within the confines of the Catholic cultural ghetto and more to everyone outside... We are all speaking out, but what is more significant is that we are listening to what our brothers are saying. This is the revolution that stamps this particular moment in history with its unique mark,” he argued, urging an inclusive sharing of ideas to create a more nurturing environment for a culture of revolution. Keating stressed the importance of this self-aware relationship of cultural understanding, but he concluded his Statement with a much more inward-looking inclusiveness: “And most important is the dialogue with oneself when one peers deeply into one's consciousness.”¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁹ The Port Huron Statement, 60.

¹⁹⁰ Edward M. Keating, "A Statement From the Publisher," *Ramparts*, Vol 3. No. 2 (October 1964), 2.

Echoing these concepts, an editorial titled “The Year of the Lemming,” from the April 1965 edition of *Ramparts*, stated, “What is needed is a revolution in the concept of man.” The primary focus of the article was to discuss how liberal politics and the presidency of Lyndon Johnson simply represented “solutions” which were ultimately “more of the same”: “We cannot have a continuation of the lemming mentality that marches us all to the atomic sea of oblivion.”¹⁹¹ Like Ogelsby’s critique of corporate liberalism, the author suggested that subjugated peoples continually settled for having the “splinters smoothed” by liberal concessions instead of having a proper, necessary, radical restructuring of policies. The author did not suggest concrete, radical programs to replace liberal politics; he rather suggested the more abstract solution of “a revolution in the concept of man,” urging that people “must see the problems as human problems,” not regional ones, or international ones.¹⁹² It was these early expressions of the values of self-exploration and the revolutionary potential of the human spirit that marked the New Left with some of its most abstract but idealistic expressions for a new society.

Hopeful idealism was indeed a founding aspect of SDS. “Doubt has replaced hopefulness—and men act out a defeatism that is labeled realistic,” read The Port Huron Statement about how idealism and thoughts of a better society had been tragically lost in modern thinking.¹⁹³ In early SDS thought, idealism was not foolish or unrealistic, but a way to, at least theoretically, remedy what Goodman had labeled as a loss of community and a skewed socialization process. “People kept operating out of idealism and their instincts about what would create a better world.

¹⁹¹ “The Year of the Lemming,” *Ramparts*, vol 3, no. 7 (April 1965), 5-6.

¹⁹² “The Year of the Lemming,” 6.

¹⁹³ *Port Huron Statement* PAGE NUMBER

It was a rare moment in history,” commented an early member of SDS, Dorothy Burlage, about the writing of The Port Huron Statement.¹⁹⁴ This idealism that SDS articulated was indeed meant to be inspiring in the way it encouraged a more emotional connection with the radical self — radical meaning, literally, at the very basic roots. As the author of “The Year Of the Lemming” wrote about the opportunity to seize the “revolution in the concept of man”: “We can all begin by being a little bit more human; we can begin at the beginning, with ourselves.”¹⁹⁵

These early articulations of self-exploration and the revolutionary potential of the human spirit were indeed abstract and idealistic musings about what ideal shape the dissident movements of the Sixties could take, and as these movements became more militant, so too did this concept of self-exploration. In Nat Hentoff’s 1967 article, “Are Peace Protests Self-Therapy?” he discussed a long-standing concern and criticism of dissident culture’s protest tactics, noting how they were ultimately alienating to the general public. He opened his article by setting up a scene in which activists loudly interrupted a Sunday church service with anti-war banners showing pictures of dead children. Hentoff argued that this sort of protest tactic was ultimately ineffective, claiming the context it created was “hardly one of rational dialogue.”¹⁹⁶ Discussing guerrilla street theatre, too, Hentoff quoted the comedian Lenny Bruce, commenting on the San Francisco Mime Troupe’s invasion of a park to perform an impromptu antiwar demonstration. ““The people in the park didn't ask for this,”” Bruce said. ““They didn't come here for this. And so they're being turned off, not on.”” Hentoff’s ultimate point in addressing these

¹⁹⁴ McMillan, *Smoking Typewriters*, 17.

¹⁹⁵ “The Year of the Lemming,” 6.

¹⁹⁶ Nat Hentoff, “Them and Us: Are Peace Protests Self-Therapy?” *Evergreen Review*, vol 11, no. 48 (August 1967), 47.

protest tactics was to suggest that, with “all due respect” for the courage of these protestors, “their act's essential effect was to make them feel relevant...”¹⁹⁷

Hentoff’s suggestion offered an important and relevant criticism of the movements’ protest tactics, as public alienation was indeed a serious issue, as *Time* magazine’s coverage of the “SDS radicals and their allies” takeover of a Harvard building indicated.¹⁹⁸ Hentoff was also articulating concerns from within movement groups and organizations, which were constantly evaluating how to organize and protest in an effective way; it was not necessarily effective to quietly engage bystanders—the “moyen citizen”—but it was also not necessarily effective to create a civil disturbance and inconvenience and anger people. Hentoff’s insistence that protestors created such theatrical and disturbing protests because they needed to feel relevant cast the issue in a different light, though, suggesting, very critically, that these protestors were being carelessly self-indulgent. However, the article offered important thoughts about self-examination by simply asking in the title, “Are Peace Protests Self-Therapy?” Hentoff implicitly answered his own question with a resounding and critical “yes.”

Through expressing his own opinions and by including Lenny Bruce’s comments about public protest and civil disobedience, Hentoff certainly expressed a valid and a socially relevant point about the negative consequences of public protest. However, he also expressed a perhaps unnoticed but necessary aspect of these sorts of protest as a means for people to mollify their guilt and their anger; Hentoff’s article appeared years before the GI antiwar movement began

¹⁹⁷ Hentoff, “Are Peace Protests Self-Therapy?” 48, 47.

¹⁹⁸ To reiterate, this article claimed that “The SDS radicals and their allies had clearly violated Harvard's tradition of open communication and rational discussion,” This declaration was a clear statement of alienation, which made no room for any rational discussion of SDS and their allies’ intentions and politics.

guerrilla street theatre demonstrations, but these GI activists frequently spoke about their protest tactics and efforts as a way to come to terms with their feelings of guilt about the war. Even before the GI antiwar movement became an organized force, it was clear that there was an eager audience for GI antiwar criticism. Dave Goode, a Navy combat veteran of World War II and Korea, wrote to *Ramparts* after having read Donald Duncan's 1966 article, "The Whole Thing Was A Lie." "It was like having one's soul massaged," he noted.¹⁹⁹ As discussed earlier, there were certainly people who thought Duncan was a traitor for writing this article. However, Dave Goode's letter suggested that public expressions of protest were crucial for creating a therapeutic community for others. Comparing reading the article to "having one's soul massaged" spoke to an inherently inward-looking need for peace and resolution about the personal trauma of war and the actions these soldiers had committed.

Considering how antiwar GIs, and Vietnam GIs and veterans in general, had sometimes been called "baby killers" by the general public,²⁰⁰ public protest became absolutely necessary to antiwar GIs as a means to educate the public, and to try to purge the emotional guilt of the war experience. Vietnam Veterans Against the War's dramatic "If You Had Been Vietnamese" street theatre demonstration, part of their "Operation RAW" protest march in September of 1970, was no doubt an example of a publicly disruptive protest that had the potential to alienate every-day citizens and passers-by. Though they "didn't come as respectable citizens politely asking for an end to the war," what they most wanted, "on an individual level, was a chance to talk to as many people as possible about what they had seen, and in many cases, what they had done." Some

¹⁹⁹ David Goode, Letter To the Editor, *Ramparts*, vol 15, no. 1 (June 1966), 9.

²⁰⁰ Hunt, *The Turning*, 21.

even went to the Pentagon to turn themselves in as war criminals, and, in the early months of 1971, VVAW held the “Winter Soldier Investigation,” in which soldiers from Vietnam gathered to hear and report testimonies about “the pervasive nature of war crimes.”²⁰¹ A major part of this process of addressing the harsh realities of the war was indeed to involve everyday citizens in these terrible, consuming emotions that GIs felt about what they had done in Vietnam, no matter how inconvenient or disruptive it may have been. This sense of guilt, they believed, was an issue that *should* be understood, if not entirely felt, by the general population. By reaching out to everyday citizens in this way, GI antiwar activists indeed treated peace protests as a form of self-therapy.

Though Hentoff was critical of disruptive peace protests when he suggested that they were a form of self-therapy with the purpose of making activists feel important, this idea of self-therapy was ultimately a continuation of the ideals of self-exploration and human betterment. As these GI antiwar activists demonstrated, they were confronted with a great emotional crisis of conscience when they looked inward at themselves and their actions, and questioned the morality of their — and the country’s — behaviour; the “dialogue with oneself” ultimately became an exploration of inner trauma and a means of dealing with being a radical activist in mainstream society. This sort of inner trauma was not limited to GI antiwar activists, though. Like Donald Duncan suggested, just because young antiwar activists had not gone to war did not make their antiwar activism and conflicted feelings about their place in patriotic American culture any less valid.

²⁰¹ Goldberg, “Vietnam Vets,” 13; Moser, *The New Winter Soldiers*, 110.

The radical activist and author Dotson Rader certainly expressed these kinds of feelings in his long and detailed personal account of his experiences at Columbia University during the takeover in the spring of 1968. Amidst details of everyday life in the occupied buildings, Rader declared that the takeover was, ultimately, a fantasy, and that he and the other radical activists were “acting anyway against the suspicion that none of it matters.” He wrote,

Over WKCR a pompous professor was bitching about the fact that the majority of the Columbia students opposed the liberation (perhaps) and that the overwhelming number of students in the building were being “duped by SDS” (so what?). It mattered for nothing since this was the first event in most of our lives where we felt effective, where what we were doing belonged to us... I knew [the cops] could bust in any time they wanted. There will be no revolution... All that mattered was the 200 of us in solidarity for the first time, together in our place in our time, against the cops outside... against the fucking American nation hoping for our blood.²⁰²

Rader’s experiences at Columbia were certainly different than GIs’ experiences in Vietnam, but he nonetheless expressed a similar emotional connection to radical action. Such forms of resistance were not necessarily a way to achieve political change or alter cultural norms, but rather a way to connect with one’s most basic human emotions. Like the antiwar vets in VVAW, Rader’s description of his place in the Columbia protest widened the scope of what protest could mean on a deeply personal, individual level, regardless of how effective one’s efforts might be. Just as Keating suggested, it was a means of having “a dialogue with oneself when one peers deeply into one’s consciousness.”²⁰³

When Keating wrote this “Letter From the Publisher” in 1964, he wrote it with a sense of urgency and a sense of hope for the growing radical community of the Sixties. Within just a few

²⁰² Dotson Rader, “Up Against the Wall!” *Evergreen Review*, vol 12, no. 56, July 1968.

²⁰³ Keating, “A Statement From the Publisher,” 3.

years, though, it shifted from this abstract notion of exploring the self to a more practical notion of remedying the traumas of war and the radical lifestyle. As Hentoff and Rader, and the veterans in VVAW suggested, there was a considerable element of introspection and self-therapy that had grown in radical action. The book *The New Left: A Collection of Essays*, edited by Priscilla Long and released in 1969, showed a tremendous preoccupation with this idea of how to reconcile radical action and a radical lifestyle with the emotional needs of the individual and the radical community. In one particularly compelling essay titled “Getting By With a Little Help From Our Friends,” prominent SDS activists Barbara and Alan Haber discussed their experiences at the “Radicals In the Profession Conference.” The event was “a response to an essentially personal crisis that is widespread among people in the movement: the crisis of remaining radical beyond the college or graduate school years.” The Habers claimed that the conference’s political accomplishments “must be judged as minimal.” However, they noted that on a personal and emotional level, the conference was “a good, even an excellent one,” because it “exposed the common needs of the participants.”²⁰⁴ These needs were to discuss the more *emotional* aspects of how to sustain a radical lifestyle beyond these college years, as “organizing simply burns people out,” and individuals in the movement inevitably needed to move forward, or move on. Radical consciousness, though, “has produced a painful awareness of the personal emptiness and social evil of most traditional career paths,” which made life beyond the movement, in a “regular profession,” a bleak alternative.²⁰⁵

²⁰⁴ Barbara Haber and Alan Haber, “Getting By With A Little Help From Our Friends,” in *The New Left: A Collection of Essays*, ed. Priscilla Long (Boston: Extending Horizon Books, 1970), 289-290.

²⁰⁵ Haber and Haber, “Getting By With A Little Help From Our Friends,” 291-292.

Though the Habers' article offered a relatively lengthy discussion of the practical possibilities of how avocational radicals in the movement could attempt to integrate radicalism into professional jobs, the overriding focus of the article was to address the emotional trauma of being an aging radical in mainstream society. "The themes of isolation and co-optation dominated the professionals conference," they wrote. "In a sense they were the real issue: how to stay sane and how to stay honest, while trying to be effective." The authors suggested that what was needed was "a network of comradeship" that could "break the barriers of isolation and create pressure against copping out."²⁰⁶ The activist and draft resister Rick Margolies expressed these same sentiments in his essay in this *New Left* collection: "Now the years of dreaming and visionary phrase making are over and we stand face to face with ourselves. Our hardships in the past few years have shown the road that supports us in helping each other work things out emotionally and intellectually is the path of greatest political relevancy as well."²⁰⁷ In this general discussion of where the movement had found itself by the end of the Sixties, these activists drew an inextricable link between political action and the emotional well-being of the radical individual.

In Margolies' essay, it is especially relevant that he identified the difference between the "years of visionary phrase making" and the "hardships of the past few years" as the main reason why movement radicals needed to focus on emotional wellbeing; the action and ideals of the movement changed so rapidly, over the course of a few years, that the "broader purpose" of the movement — its "visionary phrase making" — got lost amidst the feverish immediacy of direct

²⁰⁶ Haber and Haber, "Getting By With A Little Help From Our Friends," 307.

²⁰⁷ Rick Margolies, "On Community Building," in *The New Left: A Collection of Essays*, ed. Priscilla Long (Boston: Extending Horizon Books, 1970), 355.

action and confrontation. “It’s hard to be radical for long. Nothing happens. How shall we live? Where is the revolution?” wrote the Habers. They eloquently captured the overwhelming feelings and frustrations of radicals at the conference.²⁰⁸ The activist Richard Rothstein’s essay from the same book — which ultimately, as a whole, read like an outpouring of emotional despair at the direction the movement had taken — lamented, “As this is written in January '69, feelings of uncertainty and depression are common among many New Left activists. The mass anti-war sentiments which the movement created never translated into mass radical organization.”²⁰⁹ When the Habers wrote that “organizing burns people out,” this frustration was precisely the point they were trying to convey: that so much importance had been put on hopeful ideals and direct action that, without satisfying results and serious political or cultural change — or even revolution — radical activism could become fatally disappointing.

Curiously, one major antidote to this problem of disappointment with radical action and the radical lifestyle came from the counterculture, and what the journalist Donovan Bess referred to as “the exploration of inner space.” “Exploring inner space is as radical as exploring outer space,” wrote Bess, referring specifically to the drug experience and the idea of “dropping out” as an expression of a truly radical identity. “Viable people really want out this time,” Bess argued, referring to this idea of “dropping out,” though not limiting this idea to a withdrawal from social or political engagement. “Some of [these viable people] find revolutionary opportunities outside: They sit in, lie in, sleep in, teach in, think in. Others find scene inside: that is the radical way, for it breaks with our tradition of looking for salvation in deeds alone,” he

²⁰⁸ Haber and Haber, “Getting By With A Little Help From Our Friends,” 290.

²⁰⁹ Richard Rothstein, “Evolution of the ERAP Organizers,” in *The New Left: A Collection of Essays*, ed. Priscilla Long (Boston: Extending Horizon Books, 1970), 272.

continued. In his article in the April 1966 edition of *Ramparts*, “LSD: The Acid Test,” Bess discussed using LSD to truly learn about oneself through a sort of “psychedelic death” in which, out of a great—drug-induced—cosmic aloneness, “somebody gets born into this vacated body.” This sense of renewed consciousness and sensitized perception, and, in a perhaps more relatable sense, “soul searching,” was Bess’s definition of true radicalism; to break “with our tradition of looking for salvation in deeds alone” allowed for a more emotional, inward-looking, and truly radical engagement with the self, as opposed to relying on outward action and success for a sense of purpose.²¹⁰

Bess, writing in 1966, posited these ideas before militancy and disillusionment and “burning out” became a major preoccupation of the New Left, so they cannot be directly applied to the emotional predicaments of the late Sixties and early Seventies, which more counterculturally-oriented activists also felt. Even the vibrant, positive personality of the acid guru Timothy Leary had been hardened by disillusionment, as he abandoned his LSD-oriented pacifism and became involved with the militant, violence-based activism of the Weathermen.²¹¹ Drug-users, like political organizers, also “burned out,” as the Habers suggested—a term which was, in a tongue-in-cheek way, more applicable to drug users too. However, it was almost as though Bess anticipated the issues of a more intellectual, political, and action-based approach to dissent, foreseeing the potential emptiness of looking for “salvation in deeds alone.” This kind of “exploration of inner space” was present in early New Left writings — it had a similar tone to

²¹⁰ Donovan Bess, “LSD: The Acid Test,” *Ramparts*, vol 4, no. 12 (April 1966), 42 [<http://www.unz.org/Pub/Ramparts-1966apr-00042> Accessed October 16 2014].

²¹¹ Martin A. Lee and Bruce Shlain, *Acid Dreams: The Complete Social History of LSD: The CIA, The Sixties, and Beyond* (New York: Grove Press, 1985), 264.

the need for a revolution in the concept of man, and to having a dialogue with oneself; Bess simply offered a concrete method of how to, personally, seek that revolution and how to have that dialogue. Like battles between culture and politics, then, the counterculture and the New Left were again very closely linked in their values for a new society. As Jack Newfield argued, they simply differed in their methodologies and their definitions of true radicalism.

In the counterculture, ideas of lifestyle experiments and drug culture were hampered by one of the most popular catch phrases of the Sixties, “Tune in, turn on, drop out.” Activists and historians alike have applied this catch phrase to analyses of the Sixties in nearly any way imaginable: as indicative of a hippie counterculture's disengagement with both establishment and radical politics, as nothing more than a hippie cop-out from work or personal responsibility, as a signifier of a form of passive political activism by means of cultural refusal, as a marker of an inward turn towards self-introspection and self-therapy, and so on. There is certainly validity to all of these interpretations of how people used drugs, though drug use as self-therapy was indeed where it was most closely linked with the emotional character of New Left politics and activism. Some of the earliest articulations of New Left ideals and radical identity dealt heavily with individual exploration and self-betterment, and how to heal the psychological effects of being a dissident in mainstream society. A stylistically psychedelic advertisement for one of the rock musician Phil Ochs’ albums, which made implicit but obvious references to hallucinogenic drugs,²¹² advertised that the album was “not an Answer” to modern-day perils, but that “it offers

²¹² The advertisement, written in swirling, psychedelic lettering read, “PHIL OCHS is a poet who has stretched his art beyond the limitations of the industry of recorded sound... What PHIL OCHS has created is a movie without pictures. See it in the nearest drive-in (which is your own mind).”

the opportunities of an Awakening... Outside of a small circle of friends, there are people waiting for friendship, aching for comfort.”²¹³

While these New Left and countercultural activists were expressing how seriously they were “waiting for friendship” and “aching for comfort,” social protest movements of the early Seventies were indeed founded on these ideas of emotional community. The founding of the women’s movement was built on women simply discussing their feelings about their place in the movement, or in society, or about their sexuality. The GI antiwar movement, which lead antiwar activism into the Seventies, was a search for a captive audience to which to lay bare the guilt and trauma that they carried. In *The Conquest of Cool*, Thomas Frank discussed how this turning-over from the Sixties into the Seventies has been written into history as a “standard countercultural myth,” which posited that Sixties dissent ended “with the noble idealism of the New Left in ruins and the counterculture sold out to Hollywood...”²¹⁴ Though Frank refuted this standard myth by discussing how the business world was itself a major and enduring locus of countercultural sensibilities, this myth also neglected to acknowledge how New Left idealism was not in ruins by the Seventies; it was simply adapted and made more practical to the changing realities of the movement and the emotional needs of its participants.

²¹³ Advertisement, Phil Ochs album, *Evergreen Review*, vol 12, no. 51 (February 1968), 24.

²¹⁴ Frank, *The Conquest of Cool*, 5.

Conclusion: Sixties Legacies and Personalities

One day in the early 1970s, Paul Krassner was out for a walk. He noticed a poster of Angela Davis in the window of a “hip store.” “Does the owner support her case?” he asked. “Naw, but it sells Afro wigs,” the store clerk replied. Such was the story of mainstream cooptation of radicalism; in a rather simple nutshell, radical style became commodified, and radical politics became eclipsed. Cooptation and neutralization was a much more nuanced cultural and political phenomenon, and Paul Krassner offered a compelling reflection of how this kind of commodification may have been just what mainstream culture needed to begin to understand and accept radical politics: “But cooptation has a way of boomeranging. Yesterday, a poster of Che Guevara. Today, a book by him. Tomorrow...?”²¹⁵ Like Nat Hentoff, who suggested that direct-action protest tactics ultimately alienated the mainstream, every-day citizen, Krassner reflected on cooptation as a possibility to ease these mainstream, every-day citizens into the more challenging aspects of radicalism. Begin with a mainstream trend, he argued, then learn more about it, and then, there is a world of possibilities.

Those possibilities that Krassner imagined were certainly kept alive in existing dissident culture and the continued efforts of activists, especially liberal and radical feminist groups. However, since the Sixties, the spirit of dissident commodification was also kept alive through an almost grotesque commercial commitment to selling dissent. Thomas Frank noted that, with the economic downturn of the 1970s, many advertising companies that had embraced a creative, almost dissident form of corporate advertising in the 1960s abandoned this experimental and

²¹⁵ Krassner, *How a Satirical Editor Became a Yippie Conspirator in Ten Easy Years*, 22.

stylistically risky approach to selling in favour of more traditional, subdued advertising campaigns. The 1970s, though, certainly had its fair share of radical dissidence, which made a disturbing corporate resurgence in recent years. The murder of four students at Kent State in May of 1970 signalled, to some, the end of student dissidence, and to others, such as the SDS and the VVAW, a galvanizing event for renewed revolutionary passions. It was certainly a notorious event, and an ominous precursor to the violent powers the police state could wield. However, in recent years, the clothing company Urban Outfitters invoked this traumatic shooting as a way to sell its hipster wares; they produced a sweatshirt, bearing the Kent State University seal. The logo was printed on a faded, light-red sweatshirt, made to look vintage. A mainstream company producing a Kent State sweatshirt is not in itself anything unusual. However, beside the Kent State University seal, was an unmistakable blood splatter, complete with small holes. A piece of history! All for the low cost of \$129!

Though the Huffington Post claimed that the sweatshirt sold out quickly, Urban Outfitters came under harsh criticism for producing a piece of clothing that made a clear allusion to the Kent State shootings.²¹⁶ According to the company, though, it was all just one, big, unfortunate misunderstanding about the quality of “sun-faded vintage” fabrics:

It was never our intention to allude to the tragic events that took place at Kent State in 1970 and we are extremely saddened that this item was perceived as such. The one-of-a-kind item was purchased as part of our sun-faded vintage collection. There is no blood on this shirt nor has this item been altered in any way. The red stains are discoloration from the original shade of the shirt and the holes are from natural wear and fray. Again, we deeply regret that this item was

²¹⁶ Kevin Short, “Urban Outfitters Hits New Low With Faux Blood-Stained Kent State Sweatshirt,” *The Huffington Post* (September 15, 2014) [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/09/15/urban-outfitters-kent-state_n_5821978.html]; Accessed May 15, 2015]

perceived negatively and we have removed it immediately from our website to avoid further upset.²¹⁷

It seems just a bit too coincidental that this particular sweatshirt, bearing the Kent State University seal, just happened to be red, and just happened to have darker red splatters and smudges on it, and also just happened to have small holes in it; it was apparently Urban Outfitters that was the most upset that their product could have been “perceived as such.” Regardless of their intention, the sweatshirt had a blatant message, and it was that the image of Sixties dissidence was still commodifiable.

When John Lahr wrote in 1969 that “Underground culture gradually became a nation’s most definable sights and sounds,” he picked up on a trend that would last well beyond the heyday of the Sixties underground. Scholars and historians too have joined in this discussion of the long-term implications of the mainstreaming of underground, dissident culture. As Edward Morgan and Todd Gitlin argued, one of these implications has been that the historical record has been so confounded by skewed media representations of dissident culture and politics that it has become almost inaccessible, and that dissidents had fallen prey to cooptation and hegemonic establishment media representations. Other historians, though, such as Michael Kramer and Thomas Frank, believe that the mainstreaming of dissident culture has created a historical record that simply must be treated as such; dissident politics and culture existed alongside, and often within, the mainstream. It was nevertheless a major issue and preoccupation amongst radicals who sought to fight and confound the establishment media, and it was indeed a serious challenge

²¹⁷ Urban Outfitters apology, *Twitlonger* (September 15, 2014) [http://www.twitlonger.com/show/n_1sagorq; Accessed May 15 2015].

to their ability to properly publicize and portray the movement. However, all of these problems that radicals felt, the establishment felt too. Efforts by radicals to use cooptation to repurpose American institutions, such as the military, and to redefine ideas of patriotism, put the establishment on the defensive. Cooptation and neutralization had such a wide scope in movement culture; whether movement radicals were under threat from the mainstream media, or whether they themselves wielded it as an anti-imperialist weapon, or whether they unwittingly used it to perpetuate a gendered hierarchy in their own movements, it was an all-pervasive part of Sixties culture and politics.

In his book *The Whole World is Watching*, published in 1980, Todd Gitlin observed, “Inside the movement, one had the sense of being hurled through a time-tunnel, of hurtling from event to event without the time to learn from the experience. Even outside the movement, people everywhere defended against the dizzying sense of onrushing time, the bombardment of incomprehensible events.”²¹⁸ This compression of time may well be applicable to the experience of political organizing, but on a larger social scale, extra time does not necessarily mean greater clarity. With regards to the ideology surrounding war in American culture, for example, trends that dissidents identified in the Sixties have grown vastly in mainstream society. It is often said that “terrorism” is the “communism” of the present day; the greater social enemy must always have a name. Much like Jerry Rubin argued about language and “patriotic” Pavlovian conditioning, there must always be a catchword to incite the patriotic fervour of being “with us” or “against us,” as George W. Bush so infamously stated. There is still a serious preoccupation in American culture with war and the “enemy,” and this preoccupation extends back to the Vietnam

²¹⁸ Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching*, 234.

War and beyond. Dave Cline, an antiwar Vietnam Veteran, claimed that, “Historically, veterans have always been used to convince the next generation to fight in the next war... Vietnam is when all that history changed,” when the propaganda that war was a “noble cause” began to lose its power of persuasion.²¹⁹

Along with this fixation with war, the social issues of the Sixties are still alive and well in today’s American culture. Racism and police violence against blacks, fights over income equality for women, as well as pushback against gay rights and abortion have all dominated news headlines in recent years. Though these issues have persisted through the decades to varying degrees, the Sixties “moment” of political and cultural dissidence and street action has not been repeated or relived. That is certainly not to say that there have been no oppositional social movements; in recent years, the “Occupy” movements indeed had a decidedly Sixties feeling of participatory democracy and street action, beginning with “Occupy Wall Street” in New York City in September of 2011, and spanning the globe in subsequent months. Unlike the Sixties, dissident culture in mainstream entertainment has grown dramatically, with television shows like *The Daily Show* and *The Colbert Report* offering their highly critical, investigative “fake news” satire on politics and current events. One cannot help but see a glimmer of the Yippies in these television programs and their iconic hosts; Stephen Colbert, playing the character of a Conservative, right-wing pundit, was invited to the White House Correspondents’ Association Dinner with President George W. Bush in 2006. After making some innocently-framed quips about the NSA monitoring the guests’ conversations, he talked, at length, about how he admired the president for his “truthiness,” a truth that comes from the gut regardless of facts - “the truth

²¹⁹ Moser, *The New Winter Soldiers*, 1.

unfiltered by rational argument.”²²⁰ The audience responded with a mixture of laughter and incredulous groans.

This mainstream appeal and acceptance of comedy news shows that are highly critical of the American government (and international governments as well) is a major departure from the realm of acceptable dissent in the Sixties; the television network CBS first selectively censored and then cancelled *The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour* in 1969 after the hosts, Tom and Dick Smothers, became too “political” and critical. “No matter how mistaken in other matters, CBS was right in its charges that the Comedy Hour tended to irritate viewers,” wrote Peter Collier in the June 1969 issue of *Ramparts* about the show’s cancellation, noting how viewers did not feel as though politics had any place in an entertainment show. “Despite their status as stars, the Smothers gradually found that the star system did not give them power.”²²¹ As Stephen Colbert showed with his invitation to the Press Correspondents’ Association Dinner, the star system did indeed give him and others like him power; he and Jon Stewart drew 215,000 people to the Washington Mall for their “Rally to Restore Sanity and/or Fear,” a rally held in October of 2010 to encourage rational discussion between people with opposing political views.²²²

Though today’s dissident culture does not look like the Sixties or have the same street presence as it did then, it is nonetheless an important and increasingly mainstream part of today’s culture. That the issues that dissident movements of the Sixties were struggling against or

²²⁰ Stephen Colbert, “Stephen Colbert At the White House Press Correspondents’ Dinner,” *The Daily Conversation*, Youtube video, 0:02:34 [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ZnuYKKtpxg>; accessed May 19 2015].

²²¹ Peter Collier. “A Doily For Your Mind,” *Ramparts*, vol 7, no. 13 (June 1969), 48.

²²² “Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert Lead Massive Rally to ‘Restore Sanity and/or Fear’ in DC,” *Democracy Now! with Amy Goodman & Juan González* http://www.democracynow.org/2010/11/1/rally_to_restore_sanity_and_or; accessed May 15, 2015).

fighting for are still such serious and divisive issues today is why it is so important to examine the *feeling* and the *experience* of the Sixties and its many challenges to dissident culture. To look at the Sixties in this more abstract way is to get a more nuanced sense of what dissidence in the Sixties really meant to the individuals who made the movements. Cooptation was about more than falling victim to mass-media establishment neutralization and commodification; authentic radicalism and dissidence could have no overriding definition; radical organizing meant more than protesting in the streets and agitating for change. Most importantly, though, to look at the Sixties in this more abstract way is to also get a sense of how opponents of radical culture felt, as the legacy of the Sixties is also felt in the pushback against its most egalitarian ideals. Just as “Chicks have become women,” and “Negroes have become blacks,” the word “feminism,” too has a different meaning, if not an entirely different word; Phyllis Schlafly, perhaps the most famous female opponent of the women’s rights legislation of the Seventies, has reminded us that “feminism” to some can mean the right to traditional gender roles. These Sixties and Seventies legacies have indeed shaped today’s culture and politics, as well as today’s entertainment; as one sign read at Stewart and Colbert’s Rally in Washington—which was basically a modern-day equivalent of a Yip-in—“It’s a sad day when our politicians are comical, and I have to take our comedians seriously.”²²³ Yippee!

²²³ Katia McGlynn, “The Funniest Signs From The Rally To Restore Sanity And/Or Fear!” *Huffington Post* (October 30, 2010), photo 17 of 834 [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/10/30/the-funniest-signs-at-the_n_776490.html]; accessed May 15, 2015].

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