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Flight from Violence: Hippies and the Green Rebellion

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The role of marihuana and LSD is crucial in the hippie rebellion. Drugs provide a social ritual, a focus of guiltless lawbreaking, and an effective medication to relieve undesired feelings of anger and aggression. The future of the hippies and their rebellion depends in part upon the further evolution of society's reaction to them but also, and perhaps most importantly, upon the long-term effects of drugs chronically employed as the materia medica of a flight from aggression and violence.

VIOLENCE is a generic term, and its role in human behavior is broad. The exertion of force to injure or to destroy describes many patterns of overt, and by extension, of symbolic behavior.

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In terms of the socially organized expression of violence in war, in systematic killing and potential destruction of human beings, the 20th century is the most violent time in human history. Simultaneously, we loudly assert the futility of violence (sometimes) and the desirability of peace (under certain conditions). Like all the major powers, most of us are prepared to fight fiercely for peace.

In a world so divided between aspiration and practice, there is a habitus of aggressiveness said to represent the American posture. It is perhaps indicative of our ambiguous image that it remains unclear whether "the aggressive American" has translated "ad" to mean "against" or to mean "toward." *Ad-gero* could mean "I go to meet" or "I go to destroy," and aggression can refer to initiative and a moving into the world in a constructively active manner or to an activity whose goal is destruction. Thus, while we decry aggression in our politics and propaganda, aggressiveness is listed as a desideratum in personnel effectiveness reports. Fierce competition is the order of the day for achievement in education, business, sports, and the arts.

Because of changes in age distribution, urbanization of the population, greater affluence, more insurance, better reporting, and the development of techniques which dip deeper into the reservoir of previously

unreported crime, it is difficult to ascertain the extent of crime per unit population and the extent to which this is changing. However, it is widely believed that violent crimes are increasing, although this may be due partly to the reporting of crime by mass media and to the blurring of definitions of "crime" with manifestations of youthful unrest, ghetto uprisings, and other issues more social than individually criminal. In this climate, it is not surprising to see youth becoming more aggressive and competitive.

The Green Rebellion

In such a climate, too, an eventual reaction could be predicted. The hippies and the Green Rebellion(7) fulfill that prediction. Green symbolizes their ingenuous ideals, their love of nature, and, of course, "grass." This movement can be seen as a rebellion against institutionalized and political violence, war, power struggles, cutthroat competitiveness, aggressive materialism, and the various forms of dehumanization found in modern society.

Drugs play a crucial role in this rebellion. Powerful psychedelic substances such as LSD provide the pharmacological sacrament for a pacifist mystique, and marijuana provides the cement that holds the movement together, giving it a social ritual, a camaraderie of guiltless lawbreaking, an endless topic of conversation, and an effective medication for the relief of feelings of anger, resentment, and aggression. Acts of violence under the influence of alcohol are commonplace, but marijuana smoking has the opposite effect. Drugs, then, provide a magic carpet to transport the pilgrims of the Green Rebellion in their flight from violence. The nature of that flight, its success and its failure, comprise the theme of this paper.

During the summer and fall of 1966 the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco emerged as the Mecca of hippiedom. An extensive description of these hippies, and the differences between them and other contemporary rebels, has been reported elsewhere(8).

To study them in their natural habitat, we established an apartment or "pad" as

a laboratory in the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco. During the summer of 1967, the heralded "summer of love," an estimated 30,000 young people invaded the "Hashbury." With the assistance of three college undergraduates and three graduate students, we studied the Green Rebellion at first hand through September and, on a modified basis, we have been doing so ever since. Our efforts ranged from joining Plastic Man (a Los Angeles Digger) as he fed people in the park to transforming "bad trips" into good ones in the back rooms of the Haight-Ashbury Free Medical Clinic. Hundreds of individual interviews and the logbooks of the research team constitute the major sources of data.

While many youngsters flocked to the Haight-Ashbury (seekers of truth, brotherhood, sanity, and sex; tourists; entrepreneurs; and moochers) only a fraction were considered genuine "hippies" by our criteria(8). Others might talk and dress like hippies and use drugs, but they themselves realized the difference, identifying themselves instead as runaways, "acidheads," or "speed-freaks." Genuine hippies might accept the label, but put no special stock in it, saying, "Hippie? What's that? I'm a free man, or as free as you can be in our society. If you want to call me a hippie, O.K.—but those are your blinders, and your IBM categories may keep you from seeing the world."

The hippies fall heir to what Anthony (1) has called our stereotypes of adolescence—the object that is dangerous or endangered, that we wish to eject, yet whose loss we mourn. The Green Rebellion provides a Rorschach card onto which each man can project, then rediscover, a small part of himself. Thus, Bishop Pike(4) has heralded the hippies as comparable to the early Christians, while others see them as a diseased band of useless, filthy, drug-taking gypsies, the quintessence of parasitic degeneracy.

The hippies' message of love, brotherhood, freedom, and nonviolence is not new; it is resonant with great religious and ethical systems of the past. But like those disconcerting people who reply to a ritualized greeting by actually telling how they

feel, the hippies seem to take literally the words of such teachers as Moses, Jesus, and Gautama. They recall to their elders the ideals of youth, mobilizing both the yearning for its return and the defenses against its loss. If heard clearly, the hippie suggests that "the glories of our blood and state" are indeed "shadows," and that most of us are working hard, and long, for consolation prizes.

The Green Rebellion of 1967 espoused a world view and a way of life based on tolerance, brotherhood, altruism, and non-violence. The hippies tended to meet others affectionately with the attitude, "I'm okay and you're okay (or potentially so)," a position usually reached through the use of psychedelic chemicals. Although most had a gourmet's approach to drugs, none was addicted. Some had gone on, like the Beatles(3), to the "nonchemical turn-ons"—mantras, chanting, Yoga, and meditation. They favored exotic reading, music, and clothes, but these were not essential, and the long hair and beads were regarded as only "the outward signs of inner grace." As one young girl said, "You can have the inner grace without the outward signs, or all sorts of outward signs and no grace at all" (i.e., the so-called "plastic hippies").

The Stages of Hippiedom

The hippie way of life apparently evolves with the individual's passage through a series of stages that may be listed as follows:

Step 1: Dissatisfaction and frequently a sense of impotence in dealing with the world, usually symbolized by one's middle-class parents. While our subjects ranged in age from 17 to 52, the vast majority of the hippies were intelligent, college-educated 20-year-olds of white middle-class background, from which they were trying to escape—less with a feeling of anger than with disillusionment and the sad conviction that their parents were unable to offer relevant models of competence. These were mostly thoughtful, sensitive youngsters with liberal, idealistic values—values perhaps articulated but not necessarily practiced by their parents.

Step 2: A search for meaning in the light of a good educational background and from an initial posture of financial—not

interpersonal—security. The search was directed toward the Haight-Ashbury by the mass media, hot and cool, establishment and underground. They supplied guidebooks and manufactured stereotypes for the youth to live out.

Step 3: Association with other searchers, some of whom seem to have discovered a Way.

Step 4: Turn on (with drugs). Tune in (on the hip scene). Drop out (from the competitive life of society).

The Glue and the Sacrament

Marihuana is, in many ways, the glue that holds the Green Rebellion together. It is the lowest common denominator, separating the "in," or "hip," from the "square," or "straight." By heightening sensory perceptivity and producing altered states of consciousness, it generates a sense of closeness with fellow pilgrims and creates a cabal outside the law. This, as well as the social dynamics of guiltless law-breaking, turned Haight-Ashbury into an asphalt Sherwood Forest. For some aficionados, LSD was no longer necessary; "pot" was sufficient for the psychedelic experience. Even when other drugs were hard to obtain, "pot" was nearly always available.

If marihuana was the glue of the Green Rebellion, LSD was its sacrament. Those who sought only excitement and colorful visions were regarded as "low-level trippers," but when the surroundings included others going through the same experience even *they* discovered a sense of sharing and interpersonal communion, an experience best understood empathically by others similarly intoxicated.

It was widely held that LSD could get rid of old hang-ups engendered by the "rat races" of life, increase one's capacity for intimacy, and help one find the Truth within the vast realms of his own mind—whether this was sought in psychological, spiritual, or educational terms. For many, there followed a strong conviction that all people—perhaps all living things—are somehow connected in a timeless, spaceless unity, rendering the concept of interpersonal violence unthinkable.

Although most of the hippies were intelligent, this is not an intellectual movement,

and their statements are generally based on perceptual and emotional changes induced by the drugs. As one girl stated, "I used to believe in love and brotherhood but I didn't experience it: it's like knowing about the Grand Canyon and then suddenly finding yourself there, seeing it, feeling it, touching it, smelling it."

The extent to which psychedelic agents produce change by chemical action on the brain, allow for change, or provide an explanation for change is hard to judge. One youth said, "I really used to enjoy fighting, and it didn't take much to get me mad, but when you feel hooked up with all time and all nature, it sort of takes the point out of stomping some guy, because in a way he's you. Besides, 'acid' has shown me I've lived other lives and will live more, so I figure it's more important to be a beautiful human being now."

Indeed, some hippies considered the effects of "acid" to be so beneficial that they used it prophylactically. Sometimes infants and toddlers were given LSD to "immunize" them against the hang-ups of the world.

Both establishment and underground commentators often viewed "dropping out" as the end of the hippie story. For the hippie it was the beginning. Once he had "dropped out," the hippie was likely to participate in some loosely organized liaison with others, a primary group between himself and the rest of the world—a commune, a tribe, a clan.

There is a great variety among these groups. Some even establish themselves in business! Others have attempted to develop small utopian agrarian communities. These pastorales are perhaps based on a very idealized picture of the American Indian, especially the Hopi, who is seen as having lived in gentle peace and harmony with his neighbors and with an unpolluted nature. Authority is distrusted; indeed, "power" is seen as the basis of many of society's woes. Power is regarded as almost synonymous with violence to the extent that leadership itself is distrusted lest it become manipulative power and ruthless domination.

Anger can occur among hippies, but it is anger at the eyeball level. It has a human quality, quite different from vio-

lence which is the outcome of a cost-effectiveness analysis.

During the summer, many a debate developed spontaneously on Hippie Hill in Golden Gate Park over the question whether it was nobler to depart from the city and its "hassles" or to drop out but remain on the scene and, by example, teach a way of life that the "power-mad" urbanites might follow before they destroyed themselves utterly. If enough drop out, hippies commented, the old "rat race" society will collapse of its own accord. "If there are no ruled, there can be no rulers!"

Thus, at a time of great escalation of man's wants, the hippie *Gemeinschaft*(6) way of life reduces some sources of frustration, and the hippie mystique offers models for those whose remaining aggressiveness (reduced by drug effects) is turned toward the creation of a different way of life. The hippies see themselves, if they have truly "dropped out," as both sane and successful. They view those who accept unquestioningly the roles society offers as "hung up," the tragic casualties of a doomed culture of violence.

That the hippies, however peaceful, threaten the destruction of the social structure has not gone unnoticed. Cambridge Mayor Hayes(2) stated, "They're not preaching love; they're preaching hate. . . . Preaching hate by downgrading everything the vast majority of people of this country believe in. This would be religious and moral concepts, law concepts; they're trying to break down everything; they're just preaching hate."

The Haight-Ashbury hippie encountered many problems. For example, few of the vast hordes of pilgrims were true hippie material. While the "plastic hippies" were often masters of passive-aggressive techniques and of "blowing the minds" of straight people—a series of transactions designed to leave the "straight" feeling sick, stupid, or crazy—the real hippies attempted to befriend the lost, the strayed, and the sick. However, this seemed only to confirm many "straights" in their conviction that hippies are fey at best, more likely mad, and somehow not quite human. Although the hippies felt that they alone were escaping dehumanization, it is nevertheless

difficult to maintain a position of "I'm okay and you're okay" in the face of a world and of media that state clearly you are not. By midsummer, there were already fewer true hippies in Haight-Ashbury, and the "summer of love" was fading into a winter of discontent.

An Uneasy Alliance and the Threat of Violence

With the smoking of the marihuana pipe of peace at the great human Be-In in January 1967, the peace-loving hippies and the notoriously violent "bikies" (motorcyclists) had formed an uneasy alliance. Each group seemed intrigued to share vicariously in the life of the other, and each group itself was more clearly defined by contrast with the other. Both were sensitive to violence, although in outwardly opposite ways. In common, they shared a kind of fluidity of identity, anti-intellectualism, ambivalence toward technology, and scorn for what they regarded as the hypocrisy of the "straights."

The motorcyclists in Haight-Ashbury were arranged as along a Great Chain of Being, with the Hell's Angels at the top. The Gypsy Jokers were further down. At the bottom were the Street Commandos; they could not afford motorcycles, but only the exoskeleton of denim, leather, and dirt.

For a time the Hell's Angels became wildly unlikely folk heroes, protectors of the oppressed and persecuted, a change attributed by Thompson(5) to Kenneth Kesey and LSD. They were expected to react with violent indignation against those who would abuse the gentle flower children.

The image of the Street Commandos was different. These were people who seemed bereft of ability to manipulate their environment. Large motorcycles like Harley-Davidsons cost several thousand dollars, and they had been unable to obtain even a Honda. For them there was no righteous wrath and no target. For them the act or the threat of violence seemed an end in itself and to hurt or to be hurt seemed to bestow some measure of meaningfulness.

Once, in July, a street scuffle drew crowds. Police, misunderstandings, rumors, and high drama followed rapidly. A riot seemed imminent. Most of the true Haight-Ashbury hippies (who, it must be remem-

bered, were only a minority group in that neighborhood) were active in trying to stop rumor, to "cool" the situation. Others were meeting to discuss legal aid to the arrested and legal action against the police.

The motorcycle groups were eager to erupt: sorties, ambushes, and escapes were planned and seemed delayed only by the waiting for more guns and ammunition. An air of *Götterdämmerung* hung over these people. They spent much of the night drinking champagne in melodramatic toasts to their expected deaths. From the reaction of those around, it became apparent that they were acting out the daydreams of losers. They were surrounded, suddenly, by an excited horde of "winos," old newspapermen, and derelicts, societal losers who didn't know how to be outlaws.

Just as violence seemed imminent, the ballet artists Nureyev and Fonteyn were "busted for pot," creating an international incident. They were held only a few hours by the police. Tension on Haight Street suddenly dissolved into laughter. The prompt release of the famous stars was interpreted as world-wide exposure of hypocritically differential law enforcement and of the moral bankruptcy of the establishment and its horrendous drug laws. **LSD suddenly seemed more plentiful than ever, and there was no riot.**

It was interesting to find that these gentle hippies, with their talk of love and peace, somehow attracted violence, thus increasing both their sensitivity to it and their defenses against it. Violence came, as was always feared and expected, from without.

The Negroes living in the Haight-Ashbury, especially those participating in the black rebellion, were not happy with the hippies. Here were whites turning their backs on the very things Negroes were striving to attain and who, like the black rebels' parental generation, make a patient, gentle, basically religious adjustment to deprived circumstances. Bands of angry Negro boys not infrequently attacked hippies, and greater violence was only narrowly averted by black community workers.

Violence also came from within. In one of the country communes, all was happy until there was an influx of "winos" and

returned soldiers. They began to spend their days in the non-hippie pleasures of drinking and fighting, but the hippies, because of their philosophical position and lack of organization, were unwilling and unable to oust them. However, the Gypsy Jokers rushed in to help their friends of the Green Rebellion. Thus, the flower children found themselves in the midst of pitched battle. Gertrude Stein to the contrary, civilization may not begin with a flower.

Whither the Green Rebellion?

The future of the hippies and their Green Rebellion is dim. It depends upon the interaction of many factors: the evolving reactions of society towards them, their own abilities to solve problems of organization and authority, their ambivalence about returning to society, war (at home or abroad, on poverty or on the poor), and above all the debilitating effects of drugs chronically employed as the *materia medica* of their flight from violence.

The Green Rebellion is not merely a spiritual and mystical one. Unlike the bohemias of the past, it is based on a pharmacological revolution. Our old drug models, based on the opiates and toxic delirium, may be inadequate for the drugs of today—let alone those of tomorrow. But chronic use of LSD and probably of marihuana in large amounts leads to apathy, enervation, and psychological immobilization.

This decrease in aggressiveness, competitiveness, and striving for usual goals has been usually interpreted medically in terms of passivity, avoidance, or even brain damage. However, among the "hippies" these qualities are viewed differently, are sought after, and are socially reinforced as valuable both to the individual and to society. Thus, even should it develop that the hippies and those imitating them pharmacologically are actually performing chemical self-leukotomies, we may face a new and even greater dilemma: Can society allow an individual, existentially suffering, to leukotomize himself gradually with drugs until he feels comfortable even if he does so knowingly?

Before replying and starting out to
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save the hippies from themselves, we should remind ourselves that psychiatrists are often seen by society as serving primarily to administer whatever treatment is necessary to bring the individual to a comfortable life adjustment. The hippies, on the other hand, with characteristic tolerance, see the psychiatrist as a nice, misguided man trying to do his thing, but under hopeless conditions: "Man, most of these shrinks have hang-ups worse than anybody's. Then they try to talk some cat into being happy though straight. Why, that's impossible! And, like, they give them the wrong dope (drugs) until they are like zombies. They ought to blow their own minds first, man, and then turn on with their patient and together they might find out where it's at."

Let me end with a story told me by a hippie, which illustrates one genre of thought in the Haight-Ashbury. It's about a teen-age runaway Italian kid called Frank. Frank was a real cool guy—he grooved on trees, on birds, and on people. But his parents were worried and embarrassed. They had worked hard and now had a good life, and here Frank was running around with a bunch of dropouts. He didn't bathe too often, he went barefoot, he even panhandled for food.

Finally, Frank was discovered breaking into his father's warehouse and giving out things free—the first Digger store. His old man took him to court. In a fit of pique, Frank stripped off his clothes, threw them at his father's feet, and stomped out of the courtroom, stark naked. Well, Frank didn't run away to Haight-Ashbury, for there was no San Francisco then, but he has become a kind of patron saint to the hippies, and, as St. Francis of Assisi, he gave his name to San Francisco.

Bishop Pike may have been correct when he likened the hippies to the early Christians: but, then, Shaw too may have been correct when he ended *Saint Joan* with the declaration that the world is not yet ready to receive its saints.

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The Marihuana Problem: An Overview

BY WILLIAM H. MCGLOTHLIN, PH.D., AND LOUIS JOLYON WEST, M.D.

Current knowledge of the use of marihuana, its physical and mental effects, and its relation to crime and to other drug use are reviewed. The authors feel that a reappraisal of the social and legal policies regarding marihuana use is needed to resolve the crisis brought about by the rapid increase in its use despite the severe penalties prescribed for violation of the marihuana laws.

THE COMBINATION of a very rapid increase in marihuana use and the severe penalties prescribed for violation of the marihuana laws has brought about a social crisis. These two phenomena are not necessarily independent. The extreme legal penalties and the gross exaggerations of the consequences of marihuana use as fostered

by the Federal Bureau of Narcotics make it an ideal target for rebellious youth to point to as an example of adult hypocrisy.

The situation is especially crucial in California. In 1967 there were 37,500 marihuana arrests in California, compared to 7,000 in 1964. Three-fourths of the cases are dismissed without trial, yet marihuana cases still accounted for 17 percent of all felony complaints issued by the Los Angeles district attorney's office during the period June through September 1967. The present rate of increase in marihuana arrests would indicate that such cases would comprise over 50 percent of the felony complaints within two years. On the other hand, in one highly publicized recent case of arrest for violation of marihuana laws, the defense collected 2,000 affidavits, the majority from persons who stated that they used marihuana and found it harmless.

A reappraisal of the social policies controlling marihuana is clearly needed, but unfortunately there is very little recent research to provide a basis for rational decisions. Virtually all the studies done in this country were conducted some 25 to 30 years ago. The dearth of recent research and absence of long-term studies is a situation largely brought about by giving the same

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