THE DEAD

HANK HARRISON

Volume I
THE DEAD

Volume I
In memory of
Robert M. Petersen and
Brent Mydland

LEGEND

For Merlin read: Augustus Owsley Stanley, III
For Troll read: Robert M. Petersen
For Mikto St. Johns read: Margo St. James
For Odduck read: Hank Harrison
For Ira Sandoyster read: Ira Sandpearl
CONTENTS

About the Archives Logo ............................................ viii
About the Cover .......................................................... ix
Foreword ..................................................................... xi
Author’s Preface ................................................................ iii
Forewarned ............................................................... 1
San Mateo ................................................................. The Beginnings 15
Palo Alto ................................................................. The Condensation 47
Berkeley ................................................................. The Politics 75
North Beach .......................................................... The Beatitude 97
Haight-Ashbury .................................................... The Celebration 123
Marin ................................................................. The Exodus 147
Big Sur ................................................................. The Holy Land 177
Europa ............................................................... The New Jerusalem 195
Index of Illustrations ................................................... 218
Annotated Index .......................................................... 230
The logo used by The Archives Press is an exact copy of an Occidental magical formula cast in a zodiac circle. It is derived in part from the *Monas Hieroglyphica* of John Dee, the Elizabethan magus. The earliest source of this signet, according to Dee, is a woodcut in a handwritten copy of *De natura rerum* of Isidore of Seville (560-636). In that work the signet accompanies a quotation from the *Hexameron* of St. Ambrose (III. xiv) *Mundus annus homo*. This was taken by the alchemical philosophers to mean that human beings are an exact depiction of the cosmos. The figure describes the interrelation of the four alchemical elements: fire, air, earth and water, with their complimentary perceptual qualities: hot, cold, dry and moist.

Elaborate astrocabalistic formulas, such as that depicted in the logo, were common in Europe from the fifth century until the end of the Renaissance. In the tenth century John Scotus Erigena, an Irish monk, expanded the idea by adapting memory systems used by the Celtic bards and Greek orators. Erigena named his system *ars naturae*: the art of nature. He also added Aristotelian structure and found proofs of the natural paths to God in the folk traditions of the Irish, Welsh and Greeks. Although Erigena was Christian his system did not meet with church approval.

The basic cosmic conception symbolized by the “knot” can be traced to Paleolithic shamanism. In this protodemocratic scheme each human being is linked to the cosmos by the Earth element which is dissolved by water. Water is linked to air by evaporation. Air is linked to fire by combustion and fire is reunited with Earth by heat. The signet also represents the eight yearly festivals or harmonies which inspired the Atlantic Neolithic mound builders to record natural laws in stone.
ABOUT THE COVER

The cover art for *The Dead, Volume One* was rendered by the renowned visionary artist Mark Roland from San Francisco. Mark, a true flower child, attended the first human Be-in at age fourteen.

The original edition, published in 1971 as *The Dead Book*, had a simple black and white cover depicting an Ouroborus, or snake eating its tail, rendered by the surfer artist Glenn Chase. In its current form Roland depicts the colorful beast at the exact moment of metamorphosis. It takes three forms as it evolves. In its primary guise, as the snake eating its tail, it symbolizes immortality, infinity and the cosmos, but it also appears as a Celtic Dragon or Griffin, symbolizing control over the self, and as a Phoenix, the mythical bird which continually renews itself from its own ashes.

The figure is ascending into the cosmos from a mystery planet. Light for its expedition is supplied by the sun at full eclipse. The rays of the sun penetrate in all directions.

The creature moves through its cycle in a concave scallop shell similar to those used as drinking ladles by the pilgrims who trek the alchemical path on the road to the shrine of Saint James at Compostella in Spain.
Moon Unit Zappa and the GTOs

X
FOREWORD TO THE ARCHIVES EDITION

This is not a book about rock and roll or about the Grateful Dead. It is, instead, a book about tribal formations and ritual and should be viewed as such. Anyone who thinks of it as a book about the Grateful Dead will be disappointed. For decades this book has been relegated to the music sections of book stores, but this categorization does not explain its life span.

The Dead Book, volume one of a trilogy still in progress, has been published in three languages and has seen a number of editions. It was first released in 1971, but soon found its way to a British Commonwealth mass market paperback and a German and French translation. Its publishing track record is amazing. It can only be called an underground classic.

Since 1976, when the first version went out of print, we have been trying to publish a revised version. We have received hundreds of letters and phone calls asking where the book could be obtained, but the author vowed not to release the book, or the final volume in the trilogy, until it could be done exactly as it was originally intended.

The present edition contains a great deal of the material deleted by the censors in the original version and excludes a lot of dumb material originally included to appease the “marketing” types whose sole motive was to exploit the name of the Grateful Dead, ignoring the sociometric merits of the work.

I repeat! This is not a book about the Grateful Dead. It is only about that group in so far as they are a microcosm of the other bands and the Haight-Ashbury experience in general. The style of presentation has changed between Volume One and Volume Two because the author and the subjects have changed. The essence of “The Dead Series” is to reflect the basic maturational process and to provide an impressionistic, real time chronicle for future generations.

If it were not for this study, the world would have only the two dimensional journalistic account of the Haight-Ashbury phenomenon. This more anthropological approach will hopefully fill in the gaps. Consider it a note in a bottle.

Canyon Draper, Publisher, The Archives
2  Hank Harrison at Presidio Gun Emplacement

XII
AUTHOR’S PREFACE TO THE ARCHIVES EDITION

being the “Jane Goodall” of rock and roll ain’t easy. It’s hard to chronicle any serial phenomenon over a 30 year period. I’m not even sure I wanted to do this, but the compulsion to write a social history, to be a Xenophon, outweighs all discretion, all pain. You stand around with a pencil in your hand and somebody gets nervous, you treat people like chimps and they get offended, even when they act exactly like chimps. You try to climb a tree to get some perspective and you fall out. One can feign the role of fool and fool a few, but eventually you must face the fact that you are interfering with the process. This study is thus tainted. How much more could I have said? How much gossip could I have included? Clearly from my binocular perch I could have fallen prey to temptation and digressed into prattle.

With chimps it’s easier. In any controlled study, the observer can remain aloof, but with people you must: “Be There!” In any study involving instinctual animals, circadian rhythms, lunar cycles, or nonverbal communications, the scientist simply observes and makes phenomenological tests. Human beings are, however, instinctively stupid. We have forgone our instincts because the behaviorists told us we didn’t have any.

I am not a behaviorist, nor am I a Freudian. I don’t believe that stimulus response is the whole answer anymore than I believe libido is the driving force. I didn’t subscribe to traditional psychology schools in the sixties and I don’t now. On the contrary, I am convinced, after studying the cave paintings of Lascaux and Altamira on location, and after living less than one mile from Newgrange in Ireland for two years, that Neolithic human beings were heliocentric, had a large instinctual vocabulary which has not been extinguished by the industrial revolution or electronic technology, and that ancient people were in fact enraptured with natural observation.

“The Dead Book;” and the trilogy, is designed to explore the tribe forming patterns that guided the era of the 1960’s and the precursor causes that formed it. It is the longest continuous study ever conducted regarding a modern extended family.
I think San Francisco State was the only school in the Bay Area, including Stanford, attempting to humanize its teachings at that time, and the only close at hand psychology school which was actually fun to go to. Most of the graduate students there were somehow attempting to replace Watsonian behaviorism with ethological science. The idea was to supplant “Pavlov’s Dog” with “Lilly’s Dolphins.”

I wasn’t the only one. The late Rodney Kent Albin, who I miss greatly and am proud to have counted among my close friends, was taking the same seminars. In 1964 I was bringing people down from bad acid trips because the medical association said it was impossible and Rod was organizing 1090 Page, including Janice and Big Brother, all the while leading marches to save the Panhandle in Golden Gate Park. Both Rod and I thought of ourselves as den mothers, not gurus. We hated paternalistic gurus.

During the 1964 season, the year before the Warlocks were formed, I was recruited by the great Saul Alinsky to help organize shop-ins. I was also getting the best writing education imaginable from Mark Lilenthal and James Schievel the founders of the Poetry Center. Life was full and exciting. To me dropping out of school was out of the question, it was just too much fun.

Most importantly we learned to study our own environment. We learned to study what was going on in our own back yard as a microcosm of the real world. Fortunately, or unfortunately, the Grateful Dead and the Haight-Ashbury were in my back yard. But if I had known Gary Duncan or Paul Kantner at that time I might have found the Quicksilver or The Airplane in my back yard. Whatever you read in this book and in the other volumes of the trilogy is as much about these great geniuses as it is about The Dead or the freaks of the 60’s. It is an attempt to credit all energy sources, not just the Grateful Dead.

My aim has always been to provide future generations with an impressionistic tone poem, a time capsule, a collage of what it was like to grow up in the Haight-Ashbury. What it was like to be a trained psychologist, field organizer and writer struck dumb in the middle of the San Francisco cultural explosion.

I managed the Warlocks for about four months in 1965 and then went back to Chicago to visit Alinsky at the Industrial Areas Foundation. Alinsky introduced me to Studs Terkel and
Nelson Algren. Alinsky, who was to die in Carmel a few years later, convinced me that bringing people down from bad acid trips was a good way of organizing a social movement. This was two years before the Haight–Ashbury clinic started. I was the first person to bring a stranger down from a bad acid trip, on the telephone, sponsored by a public agency. Everybody said it was impossible. All the while I remained in close observation of the rock scene. The car club was growing into an army.

In 1968, I burnt out on the acid gig, went to Tassajara for a few months of Za Zen under Roshi Susuki and Dick Baker and decided to call Alinsky again. It turned out Algren was the heavyweight guest at the Rocky Mountain Writers Conference that year. I went there, had a ball, and decided to write a book about my friends.

In 1969, Alinsky got me a job at Honeywell Corporation in Minneapolis right alongside Dennis Banks, one of the founders of the American Indian Movement. It was a total gas, Minneapolis was kind and regal, quiet and hard working. My days were high tech to the max and I was getting top dollar, plus they let me work on my writing.

In the fall of 1969, I saw the Altamont crisis on television and called Phil Lesh in Fairfax. That’s where the idea for this book took concrete form. I would live with The Dead in Marin and write the book, but the title was an allusion to James Joyce and a complex pun.

By 1972, the only person in the mix with 100% integrity was my editor Danny Moses, who, I must add, was instrumental in getting the book into print against long odds. Pig was sick and I knew it was time to phase out.

By 1973, I was gone to Vancouver and then to London where I studied with the late Dame Frances Yates for many seasons at the Warburg Institute. In my opinion, Dame Frances was the most important writer of nonfiction alive and her tutelage, although harsh, was without question the most important single event in my writing career.

Hank Harrison
Samhain 1985
Tara House, Tara
Co. Meath
Republic of Ireland

XV
FOREWARNED

He would only make himself ridiculous by quoting poetry to them which they could not understand. They would think that he was airing his superior education. He would fail with them if he were to take up a wrong tone.

—James Joyce, The Dead, From “The Dubliners”
The Haight-Ashbury cultural revolution was not sudden. It had roots stretching far back in history, both to Europe, where Medieval Socialism was based on an expanded hermetic Neoplatonism, and to New England where Ralph Waldo Emerson’s transcendental idealism eventually evolved into the 20th century music of Charles Ives and into other forms of expression. Asian forms are also relevant.

The Quakers, like the eventual San Francisco “rock and roll” families, placed an emphasis on sharing and charity mixed with a strong community spirit, free thought and free speech. Both dealt with a kind of astral world, while maintaining integrity and self sufficiency through barter of handcrafts, services and other commodities. It should thus be no surprise that much of what the Quakers held dear came to roost, with certain variations, in the Haight-Ashbury experience.

The seemingly strange values that “exploded” in the media in the mid-sixties in San Francisco were actually archaic traditions. The erroneously named “Flower Children” were actually gifted rebels who were cautiously applying ideologies derived from numerous utopian experiments.

The Medieval Socialism of the Manichees and Cathars blended well with Buddhism, the Kabbalah and the Tarot. These traditions took hold in a mystical element, which can best be found rooted in a pre-colonial form of Freemasonry, a form opposed in every way to the anti-intellectualism of the white Anglo-Saxon.

The charity found on the streets of San Francisco during the Vietnam war era came from a successful wedding of Christianity with Zen, Tantric Buddhism and Yoga. In fact, one of the first charity rock concerts held in San Francisco was performed to benefit the Zen Center which had been holding services in an old Christian temple on Post Street.

The pioneering complexion transplanted to the western urban scene is not sufficient, in itself, to explain how the Haight-Ashbury, and the musical poetry in its cauldron, formed so quickly. Quaker like religious freedom, with its emphasis on unity and brotherhood, explains the cathartic nature of the times, not the erotic dreamscape.
Most of the sexual change was a reaction to generations of puritanical repression. The new sexual dynamic was facilitated by disc jockeys, television, rock and roll, drugs, a new affluence with attendant permissiveness, and a reversion to pagan rituals, although few of these were really satanic.

Sexual liberation required mobility and mild winter weather. In order to go nude on a public beach one needed sunshine and a car. California provided both elements free of charge all you had to do was steal the car. The two ingredients were simply not available on the eastern seaboard, at least not in the late 1950's. The motorcycle and hot rod became major status symbols in the California youth culture. The "lead sled" became the dream car and sexuality was, to use a Quaker term, "bundled" with the new mobility.
“Daddy’s car” was not as significant as one’s own “short” and the ownership of a car represented a passage rite. Thus, independence meant fixing up a clunker of one’s own. The ownership of the “Pink Slip” was the main material goal. The idea of going to a bank for a car loan was sheer lunacy. Going to a bank meant asking the paternal society for help, thus admitting defeat, selling out.

With proud individualism the children of the late 50's, both male and female, were the first generation of Americans to walk the gauntlet from puberty to young adulthood with a set of car keys in one hand and some form of birth control in the other.

The beat of rhythm and blues, known as Do-wop on the East Coast, was the background for dancing and dating, as well as serious discussions about chopping, sectioning and channeling a car, punching a mill and controlling the geometry of a “Rake” or “California Tilt.”

The ingenuity of hot-rod driving came from good old-fashioned Yankee ingenuity with some midnight auto shopping thrown in. When money was short, most resourceful lads were able to procure gasoline with a rubber hose, known in California as an ‘Oakie credit card’ or ‘Midnight auto.’ This may have been a regression to hunter-gatherer activity, but it was a form of freedom. Irreverence for the public superego was leading, in the eyes of the parents (who were more often full of sexual envy) to the decay of normal socialization.

The elders saw sexuality as a threat. They could no longer sell or control their daughters and could not select a blood line for their grandchildren. The actors in the sexual drama saw it another way.

They saw sex as a valuable educational experience. Clearly a new form of political liberation was on the horizon.

In the early 1960s the car cult and surfer irreverence began to mix with jazz values and folk music, the “beatnik” of a slightly earlier generation set the pace. Nonconformist cliques, often rounded in a high school context, continued on long after graduation.

In the Oakland-San Francisco area the display of individual worth, the symbolic status of any given participant was put on parade in two interwoven rituals: the cruise and the drags.
San Francisco Motorcycle Club

Chocolate George's Motorcycle Family at leisure
The Dead

The cruise, in the East Bay, was ethnically mixed and went along East 14th Street from Oakland to Hayward, easily a fifty mile round trip. The San Francisco city cruise was divided into two distinct sociopolitical halves. The BART cruise, essentially the blue collar cruise, went up and down Mission, in the neutral zone between Mission High and Balboa High.

The White Shoe cruise, essentially the white collar subculture, went up and down Geary Boulevard in the neutral territory between Lincoln and Washington high schools. This wending path used the wide parking lots adjacent to Playland at the Beach as a western terminus. The voice of Laughing Sal, a frightening mechanical figure at the Fun House, added a surreal air to the assembly.

Eventually, money permitting, the many cruises would find their way down the Peninsula and would actually extend all the way to what is now Silicon Valley, following a route North and South along El Camino Real, the road to reality, according to Tennessee Williams. Everybody got to cruise on El Camino. Meeting nights were on Thursdays. This ritual set the stage for the drama to come. Both millionaires and winos were built on the values absorbed in these cruising car rituals. On Friday nights the cars became offices. The back seats were turned into love stations on wheels. Drop outs and future rock stars went through the same initiation.

For adolescents from broken homes, the surrogate families formed in a post secondary phase and for many who aspired to be a member of an extended family or “In Crowd,” the cruise ritual was so essential that it could not be easily abandoned. The new extended families, and the music and art values that sustained them year after year, acted as networks between smaller cliques. In this way the car club, the folk rock group, the rhythm and blues ensemble, the jazz band, the football team or other primary reference group became the “primal.”

It is of significance to note that these rituals still go on with the same passion, the same clan bonding as those observed in 1960. They still provided a similar extra familial outlet. In fact the cruise, the rock group and the art cabals of post adolescent San Francisco, represent at least two generations of tradition. The Hot Rod culture has now extended to
every western state and most eastern states where a modicum of affluence can be obtained.

In Oakland the illegal drags were held in large parking lots around Ott's drive in. In San Leandro the burger spot was Gordon's. The drive in movies really were “Passion Pits’ and deserved their name.

In the Mission it was either MEL’s on South Van Ness, made famous in “American Graffiti”, or THE FLYING SAUCER drive in. These places were essential because they showed off your paint job under night lights.

White suited East Coast writers might affect canes and smug attitudes as they wrote about Candy Apple paint jobs, but they could never have understood what it was like to spray the stuff on, rub it down under a cool freeway overpass and cruise it down the road. Visitors from the East Coast would have thought the whole scene fantastic and could have never understood the meaning of the shibboleth: “If it don’t go chrome it!”

The once forbidden rock and roll was played as background to virtually every activity. The same radio stations united the many night haulers. AM radio was it. KYA, was popular in 1957 and stayed popular right up until FM took over, but soul stations like KWBR and KSAN, now both long gone as soul stations, were always available at the push of a dash board button.

In The Still Of The Night was real. The lyrics even made sense... Sometimes... “Oh shoo be doo bee, doooo wahhh.” A party was always “happening.” Beatniks came to these parties and the cross over was starting. Those who were avid readers, and numerous musicians, left the cruise for the esoteric sanctuary of a loft party in North Beach. The attractiveness of intellectual stimulation in a non academic environment could not be ignored. News of the cogniscenti and rumors of wild parties above and beyond the Hot Rod scene came filtering down. Soon everybody wanted to be a “Beatnik.”

The intellectual side of the brain and a great deal of social alienation developed rapidly as beatniks like Ginsburg and Ken Kesey and Jack Kerouac influenced this new tribe of “Baby Beatniks.” Virtually everyone who wound up
The Dead

Chet Helms
contributing to the Haight-Ashbury experience, was touched directly or indirectly by the car and motorcycle culture. Almost everybody wanted to belong to something other than their genetic family.

The rock band, the art cabal, the car club or the folk or jazz ensemble became the extended family so desperately sought by the rejected and often gifted nonconformists, especially in the Bay Area. As the decades turned, the conservatism of the parental generation conflicted with the advancing dream of personal freedom held by the young people. One custom car commando was overheard saying: “If they didn’t want us to be free they shouldn’t have taught us about it in the eighth grade.”

After 1963, the fully integrated extended family grew rapidly. In many cases ties to the birth family were strained. The drop outs became black sheep. There was pain in this. The parents were judging the outcasts by old values. Some even believed their children were becoming communists. They were, of course, quite wrong. The new movement was an expression of freedoms as American as the Hot Rods that mobilized it.

By 1964 the Kennedy assassination, the music of the Beatles, the Stones and Bob Dylan merged with the advent of psychotropic drugs and the integration of black values. The genetic strings of the white middle class snapped completely.

Certain utopian ideas, even some Marxism, remained always in the background of the San Francisco lifestyle, but basically the mass movement away from middle class values was timely and inevitable. These systems provided guidelines for the young people as they made the transition from traditional societies to alienated antagonistic politically dangerous free thinking sub cultures.

Once the transition was made, they came flooding into the Haight-Ashbury and North Beach from the suburbs and from small country towns all over the nation in search of companionship and cheap, or even “free” rent. At first they came in slowly and then, as the media made a show of it, the tidal wave hit.

It is a tribute to the State of California that the study of the proud traditions of the missions and the westward settlers were mandatory in every school and college, second only to
The Dead

8  Mike Ferguson with Jack Sergeant

9  Pig Pen, Jorma Kaukonen, Margarita Kaukonen and friends
United States history. Thus, every potential commune had at least one leader who had a rough idea of California utopian traditions—traditions that go back to the Elizabethan discovery of New Albion by Sir Francis Drake and to the fulfillment of the prophesies of the Franciscans who, while thinking of establishing a New Jerusalem in California, likened the state to an Islamic Caliphate, a paradise on Earth.

Eventually the car club, basically the aristocracy of Bay Area adolescent culture, merged into the rock group. The folk rock groups became “The Family Dog.” In a symbolic sense the Barons and the Chariots and the Pharaohs and the Diggers breathed life into the Quicksilver Messenger Service, The Grateful Dead, The Mystery Trend and the Charlatans. The Hot Rod influence was commemorated by Alton Kelly, Rick Griffin, Mouse, Victor Moscoso and Wilfred Satti in 1979, when they rounded a mysterious art gang called “The Artistas.” Kelly insisted that every member would wear his or her satin car club jacket embroidered with the individuals name over the heart.

By 1965, the various gang-family centered life styles began to blend, as did all forms of poetry, music and art. A number of trend setters emerged. Bill Graham, Chet Helms sent out the call. The rock pavilions’ would produce hundreds of posters each year. The Artistas would stay alive forever. The cultural revolution, long anticipated, was happening NOW.

Mike Ferguson—the founder of the Charlatan’s and a part time street barker for The Velvet Swing topless club when he wasn’t a shoe salesman at Floreshiem’s—actively preached the new crusade. One only had to meet Ferguson at his store front on Divisadero called Magic Theater for Madmen Only, to know what direction the whole movement was headed.

Chet Helms, also a Barker on Grant avenue at the Fox and Hound, where Janis Joplin got her start took off to Mexico and went into a Romilar trance, but when he came back he proceeded to set up concerts at California Hall and out on the beach at Robert’s, a once famous roller rink converted into a model car race track. Robert’s at the beach gave Steve Gaskin his first big audiences. Monday nights were big gatherings

11
and Chet made it happen. Everybody used to show up at Robert's on Monday until Gaskin's thing got boring. Even so Gaskins free farm movement took off from there and the Rainbow People were still gathering thirty years later.

Musical genius was abundant. Hunter and Garcia, and Cippolina and Getz and the Albin Brothers and Kanter and Balin and Frieberg emerged as leaders at this point. Now the extended families were financially secure and self perpetuating. Every nonconformist in the area, and many from other areas, got the message both subliminally and overtly. A new society was forming, an American patriotic society, basically opposed to both Marxism and Capitalism, yet a society with an aristocracy and a craft guild class. This gypsy subculture was fully in place by 1966.

The experience wasn’t all that wonderful. Many just disappeared but many made it. One large blob of interconnecting musicians became known to themselves as The Planet Earth Rock and Roll Orchestra and each dues paying member remembers what a hell of alienation it was. What crawling out of a frozen garbage can was like, what really going off the deep end on Valo, Wyamine or Peyote was like. Everybody remembers not being able to figure out how they got rich or how they lost it all, or how Rod Albin began to die, or whether or not Janice OD’d or was it a hot shot laid on her by the anti-rock and roll assassination squad?

They forget why Pig Pen decided to not care about himself, or how Miss Lucy burned holes in her arms with cigarette lighters from qualludes and poison mushrooms, and remembering the bull dyke that drove the wrong way on the freeway because her old lady went back to the husband.

They forgot because they cared too much sometimes. You had to be awake to remember the beauty of the city wandering aimlessly on acid, the fog at silent dawn. The stigmata on the statue of St. Francis was never recognized. The Buffano grandeur in granite was moved to Fisherman’s Wharf because it blocked the steps for the wedding processions.

Anyone who saw Ginsburg on TV in the early 1960s and learned the quick Zen lessons, liked jazz and Leadbelly, wore a beret and sandals and let his or her hair grow long knows that
this is true San Francisco, knows that the baby car club beatniks came first before the newspaper hippies. There was only one door open for nonconformists in those days. Kennedy was president, like he was the head head. It was like everybody knew he smoked pot, so that meant we had permission to swing.

Some of these ghostly souls began to glow, not just with acid-leave it to the squares to blame the change on acid-but with a new initiation into the Gnostic rhythms, the secrets of the Neoplatonic folk soul. It was hiding in bistros and pizza parlors. By 1965, the new rock was on its way, everyone had heard about it. If you were at Magoo’s, in Menlo Park, around June 16th 1965, you would have discovered the Warlocks. This group later changed their name to the Grateful Dead, but it happened all over in hundreds of bistros.

1965 was when the bubble jelled enough for everybody to see who was inside. That’s when Mr. Tambourine Man was hot, when everybody knew Dylan was into electricity. According to the Puritan folk soul of America it was satanic, the anti-Christ had arrived, doesn’t he always?

It seems like every time a bunch of people get out there and start movin’ and swinging and takin’ off their clothes and wearing flowers in their hair the Puritans, who hung the witches in Salem and killed off the Ghost Dancers on the trail of tears, start ripping books out of the library. The sensors took Tarzan and Jane out of the libraries in California that year... they weren’t married by benefit of clergy.

The archetype of evil was actually the most liberating force to hit the coast since V.J. Day. Acid came in trickles at first, then in waves. It came in sugar cubes from IFIF, the International Federation for Internal Freedom in Millbrook, New York, and it came from Sandoz in 25 microgram pills. It even came in bottles called Blue Lagoon. All of this happened long before Owsley showed up on the set.

Acid, like the Holy Grail in Parsifal, was born aloft on a cushion of Archmardi root, a purple pillow with gold tassles... the crown jewel of all heads—the ability to modify your own consciousness at will, the ability to get into and out of and control your own dreams... the first LSD.
The music got better and louder, if not better then at least louder. Many hated the idea of taking LSD at a rock concert. Meditation with it was the correct thing to do but that turned out to be a minority view. The fad was to go to a concert and blow your brains out.

After that everything got modified. The music became silly and serious at the same time. Another channel was opened up. The serious music and its poetry oozed into the middle class ghettos of middle America, out to the ladies playing Cribbage at the country club, to the teeny boppers lost in the old tech Wurlitzer juke boxes in Aurora, Illinois, and Scarsdale and even Vancouver and Amsterdam. Everyone started doing music numbers, poetry bent towards music, painting became light shows, dance became ecstatic, free form dervish like dance and everybody did it, literally anybody could do it. That which was once drab became rainbowed and prismatic in every respect, that which was once a Quonset Hut became a Paolo Soleri city overnight.

A finite number of curiosity seekers, the gypsies that later made the Haight-Ashbury happen, did all of these things at an accelerated pace. They seemed to be passing through stages of initiation, gradually, harmonics, octaves of reality, as if they were passing through a Neolithic light beam to discover a river and a Goddess, an alternative Occidental religion, mixed with Buddhism, a religion which would open the vaults to the twenty-first century vision.