

violence. Indeed the connection between anarchist ideology and terrorism was always problematic. Peter Kropotkin, one of anarchism's foremost theoreticians, was deeply skeptical about propaganda by deed and opposed individual acts of terrorism—much preferring spontaneous mass revolt. Scholarly investigations of a “Black Hand” or “Black Band” of anarchists operating across countries and continents demonstrate that they were almost certainly figments of the imaginations of police, journalists, and others. In conclusion, Messer-Kruse's arguments are often ingenious but should be read with a considerable grain of salt.

RICHARD BACH JENSEN

Counterculture Kaleidoscope: Musical and Cultural Perspectives on Late Sixties San Francisco

Nadya Zimmerman

Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008; 240 pages. \$31.95 (hardcover), ISBN 978-0-472-11558-7

Nadya Zimmerman's *Counterculture Kaleidoscope* asks us take another look at—and give a more critical listen to—the “San Francisco Sound” of the 1960s. Contrary to popular memory and even much of the scholarship of the time period, she argues that we cannot simply lump this musical scene in with the broader oppositional efforts of the New Left, the antiwar effort, or the civil rights struggle. Instead, we must recognize how the bohemians who emerged from the ashes of the Beat Generation and the folk revival to forge San Francisco's psychedelic rock style between approximately 1965 and the ill-fated Summer of Love in 1967 adopted a kind of libertarian, anything-goes sensibility that, because it refused to take oppositional positions, ultimately undercut their very aspirations to break free of mainstream Cold War American consumer culture.

To Zimmerman, the effort to resist fixed foundations of any kind was, paradoxically, the foundational countercultural attitude pioneered in mid-1960s San Francisco. This led, she contends, to many problems. Expressing an escapist mode of neutrality and a commitment to uncommitted openness, the

music and ideas of San Francisco counterculturalists were easily appropriated for misuse: corporations repackaged the counterculture's surface-level transgression against mainstream American consumer culture into a new cutting-edge "lifestyle" that fit well within that very system; political activists sought to harness rock to their own agendas in ways that were anathema to the original San Francisco scene; worst of all, Zimmerman notes, the counterculture's libertarian sensibility left it vulnerable to terrifying appropriations by psychopathic figures such as Charles Manson.

For Zimmerman, these were later distortions of the original vision of the counterculture in San Francisco, but they were caused by flaws present from the start. Favoring what Zimmerman calls "disassociation," "disengagement," "negation," the "nondialectical," and "pluralism," the San Francisco counterculture became complicit in mainstream ideologies and structures of power because its participants lacked a stable position from which to counteract them. Rock music—that most representative form of the San Francisco counterculture—especially manifested aspects of American imperialism, racism, sexism, technological destructiveness, and economic complicity. "The counterculture dissolved," Zimmerman writes, "because it falsely believed, from the beginning, that it could drop out of the system when in reality, it negated association with any one category while simultaneously mirroring various aspects of the capitalist system to sustain itself" (20). The kaleidoscopic qualities of countercultural music and ideology, in other words, do not dazzle Zimmerman; for her, they masked the major shortcoming of countercultural politics in the 1960s, which was to overvalue the power of unfixated, endless flexibility.

Examining both musical texts and social contexts, Zimmerman seeks to pull the tie-dyed wool from our eyes and unplug the greatest hits soundtrack from our ears. Her book hones in on four countercultural archetypes she perceives in San Francisco rock: the outlaw, the exotic persona, the natural persona, and the New Age persona. In each case, she shows how the refusal of participants to take a stand undermined countercultural claims of liberation. She focuses on "Summertime" by Big Brother and the Holding Company (with Janis Joplin) as an example of the problematic racial dimensions of the outlaw figure, "White Rabbit" by Jefferson Airplane and "Eastern Jam" by Country Joe and the Fish as moments of Orientalist exoticism, "Sugar Magnolia" by the Grateful Dead

as a composition that feigns an appreciation of Edenic nature but reveals the lurking countercultural dependence on technology, and “ReJoyce” by Jefferson Airplane as a portrayal of how the counterculture reasserted misogyny in the guise of New Age sexual liberation and free love. At times her connections between musical text and social context seem a bit strained. She contends, for instance, that the ascending, reverse bolero bass figure, flamenco guitar flourishes, ethnic music-inspired vocal stylings, and Alice-in-Wonderland lyrics of “White Rabbit” served as mirrors of the involvement of the United States in the Vietnam War. This is by way of a long and perhaps dubious chain of associations, from Miles Davis to Moorish culture to French imperialism in the Iberian Peninsula to the British Empire. But Zimmerman’s musical analysis more often than not reveals the contradictions within so much countercultural rock, which fed off the very ideologies and technologies of mainstream, Cold War, mass consumer culture from which its makers and listeners sought to exempt themselves.

Were counterculturalists as committed to total “disengagement,” “disassociation,” “negation,” “nondialectical” thinking, and “pluralism” as Zimmerman insists? That she focuses so little on the experience and reception of rock music in the counterculture points to a weakness in the book, which assumes a kind of homological relationship between music and sociopolitical ideology. Within the San Francisco scene, one can certainly find just as many examples of engagement, association, affirmation, dialectical thinking, and a more complex version of pluralism than simply her use of the term to signify a refusal to choose sides. Historian-memoirist Nick Bromell (cited in the bibliography but not mentioned in the text by Zimmerman) links “radical pluralism” back to that famous peyote and nitrous oxide-experimenting philosopher William James. In Bromell’s account, it generated action rather than the passivity Zimmerman ascribes to rock music and the counterculture. She wants to pin down the counterculture’s refusal to be pinned down, but the swirling patterns of contradictory sounds and ideas that emanated from the famous hippie corner of Haight and Ashbury in San Francisco to the world refuse to behave.

Perhaps a better way to understand what Julie Stephens (another scholar Zimmerman cites but does not engage) calls the “anti-politics” of the counterculture is that they encompassed association and disassocia-

tion, engagement and disengagement, dialectical thinking and multiplicity, singularity and plurality. Participants certainly took pleasure in music, drugs, sex, and new modes of sociality to avoid making choices. What is more surprising is that they also made use of these pleasures to try to make sense, to work through, and to feel their way into the confounding relationships *between* existing binaries. Zimmerman's book confirms long-held suspicions that the counterculture kaleidoscope mirrored the mainstream. What she misses is how this is precisely why the counterculture was so powerful for participants who found themselves caught up in its myriad reflections.

MICHAEL J. KRAMER

A History of Utah Radicalism: Startling, Socialistic, and Decidedly Revolutionary

John S. McCormick and John R. Sillito

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McCormick and Sillito compile years of research in this exhaustive study of radicalism in Utah. They argue that Utah has a long radical or Socialist tradition that has been forgotten or hidden in state narratives. That tradition illuminates the diversity and color that were always Utah and that contribute to the larger story of American socialism. The authors define radical movements as those calling for a thorough and ongoing change in the social and economic dynamics of their particular age, those “progressive” voices raised in active opposition to the dominant power structure, those individuals imagining a world of greater opportunity and freedom than their own. Their narrative illuminates a different and more complicated past and a way to reinterpret the state's historiographic traditions in “startling” ways.

McCormick and Sillito begin by tracing the roots of radicalism in Utah. They point to the early communalist doctrines and practices of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), such as their United Order of Enoch. From being radicals themselves, Mormons suppressed other radical groups from within and without as the church