

Reviews

The Hippies and American Values

TIMOTHY MILLER

Knoxville, TN; The University of Tennessee Press, 1991; 181 p.; notes, bibliography, index; photographs; \$37.50 hardcover; \$16.95 paperback.

Timothy Miller's book is a clear, well-organized study of the Hippie ethic. It takes apart the values that animated the non-political side of the 1960s counterculture, using as source material the words of the Hippies themselves, as reflected in their underground newspapers.

Miller's choice of theme enables him to achieve a maximum effort with a minimum of means. Ethical concerns were central to the Sixties Hippie lifestyle. By making them thematically central to his analysis as well, Miller is able to synthesize vast amounts of otherwise disparate material and deal with virtually every issue of importance to the Hippies. Separate chapters cover the ethics of dope, sex, rock, community, and cultural opposition. A final chapter, which could have been a bit more concisely written, discusses the legacy of that era for our own.

Miller's method—to let the hip culture speak for itself through its own writings—is both apt and uncommon. The more common approach is to use recently-done interviews with and autobiographies by Sixties celebrities to explore the period. The strength of this approach is its historical hindsight; the influence of the 1960s can be evaluated in the light of later developments. The weakness built into this strength is that the passage of time usually distorts memory and changes the way people think and what they value. The common

approach makes it impossible to recapture the way people thought and felt during the Sixties with purity and immediacy. Miller overcomes this disadvantage by using Hippie-written newspapers. They present the thinking of that day in fresh and vivid Technicolor, without later omissions or distortions.

Miller's fair-minded and thorough discussion of Hippie ethics presents the full range of countercultural thought on matters central to that lifestyle. This diversity of opinion may surprise many readers and remind others of variations they had forgotten. For instance, in "The Ethics of Dope," Miller discusses at length reasons the Hippies gave for advocating the use of certain drugs (especially LSD and marijuana), but he also gives ample hearing to voices within the counterculture that opposed drug use—Indian gurus who regarded it as an illegitimate shortcut to spiritual growth and New Left political activists, who regarded it as pacification of the masses. A less meticulous account would have been much more limited.

There has been surprisingly little written on the Sixties counterculture in recent years, when one considers how colorful and passionate it was, and how extensive were its legacies. These legacies, for Miller, include openness of sexual expression, great influence on current rock music, popularization of health food and environmental concerns, encouragement of feminism and of more recent social phenomena, such as the New Age movement and socially conscious investing. When it does come up, the Sixties counterculture is usually discussed as an occasion for nostalgia (for instance, Jane and Michael Stern's 1990 book, *Sixties People*), as a backdrop to the memoir of a Sixties celebrity (e.g., political activist Todd Gitlin's 1987 account, *Written in the 80's: The Sixties*), or as a factor in an academic critique of our current cultural condition (Steven Tipton's excellent 1982 study, *Getting Saved from the Sixties*). It is rare for this era to have a book all to itself, and one which profiles its cultural rather than political dimensions from the Hippie point of view. Miller's succinct, descriptive book fills a real gap in the literature. It is highly recommended.

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When Prophets Die: The Postcharismatic Fate of New Religious Movements

TIMOTHY MILLER (EDITOR)

Albany, NY: State University of New York Press; ix, 241 p.; notes; Introduction by J. Gordon Melton. (SUNY Series in Religious Studies) \$44.50 hardcover; \$14.95 paperback.

The traditions covered in *When Prophets Die* are so diverse as to somewhat belie the promise of its title. Fortunately, J. Gordon Melton's wise introduction manages to lend cohesion to this collection. Melton effectively rebuts the biases which the reader may harbor towards New Religious Movements, insisting that NRMs are not "cults," and that the leaders of these movements, while often charismatic in the Weberian sense, are far from the "anti-cult movement's" autocratic masters of mind control. Moreover, NRMs rarely die with their founders. Rather, in perhaps the most significant observation of the essay, they closely resemble commercial corporations (11), tending to react to the demise of the leader in much the same way as a corporate Board of Directors.

The case studies themselves raise a number of fertile issues worthy of future comparative study. Diane Sasson's consideration of the Shakers leads off the volume, examining with great clarity the charismatic appeal of founder Ann Lee, as well as the problems of the succession, consolidation and institutionalization of charismatic authority—issues which form the heart of the best essays in this volume. It is interesting to note that Mother Ann, like Mary Baker Eddy in John K. Simon's outstanding consideration of the postcharismatic fate of Christian Science (and indeed like nearly all of the Japanese NRMs), presents the paradigm of a visionary female prophet succeeded by male institution builders.

However, a number of essays present counter examples to this common stereotype. Jonathan G. Andelson provides the counter-case of the Amana Society's Christian Metz being succeeded by a woman, Barbara Landmann. Less surprising is Christine Wessinger's coverage of the Theosophical Society, where Annie Besant emerged as the effective successor to Madam Blavatsky and Col. Olcott. That a woman was accorded the honor of succession in the Hindu movement of Swami Muktananda Paramahansa may be a far more significant finding, but this is placed somewhat in doubt by Gene R. Thursby's rather apologetic approach to the Siddha Yoga movement, and his failure to note until the penultimate page of his essay (180)

that at least half of the movement refused to transfer their allegiance to the new guru.

Of the twelve traditions discussed in this book, half are (or were) fully or partially communal. One has no identifiable prophet (Rastafaris) and another has a prophet who has yet to die (Rev. Moon). Three prophetic styles emerge from this volume: founding prophets (Joseph Smith, Lee, Blavatsky and Olcott, Eddy, Jacob Beilhart and Rev. Moon); charismatic revitalizers (Christian Metz, Jacob Hutter); and missionary prophets (Swamis Muktananda and Bhaktivedanta, and again, Rev. Moon). Some scholars have chosen either to concentrate their essays on other issues (Tim Miller's explanation for the success of the Hutterite experiment in communal life and Steven J. Gelberg's excellent account of the attempt by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness to transplant an Indian belief system into a Western setting). James Miller's interesting essay on American Indian sects provides the reader with so many prophets that conclusions regarding any one are precluded. Steven Shields argues that despite apparent fragmentation, the LDS tradition continues to thrive. Finally, in perhaps the most appealing essay, H. Roger Grant describes the travails and ultimate demise of the communal experiment of the Spirit Fruit Society.

For all of its diversity, *When Prophets Die* is an important early contribution towards a new understanding of the processes of succession and institutionalization within New Religious Movements, and is recommended to scholars and the simply curious alike.

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The Utopian Alternative: Fourierism in Nineteenth-Century America

CARL J. GUARNERI

Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991; xvi, 525p.; notes, bibliography, index; photographs, portraits, maps; \$32.95 hardcover.

Carl Guarneri has done a great service for students of Fourierist Association in the United States by providing the first published analysis of the rise and fall of this popular and influential reform movement. He describes its roots in Fourier's theories and the social and economic transformations of the antebellum period as well as its

heyday in the 1840s and its decline in the 1850s. He examines not only life in the phalanxes but also both the dynamics of the national movement and Fourierism's relationship to such reforms as anti-slavery and the labor movement. Guarneri also surveys the legacy of Fourierism in the period following the Civil War. *The Utopian Alternative* is a fine and comprehensive narrative.

Guarneri also moves beyond this much-needed narrative to present an acute insight into Fourierists' paradoxical double relationship to the United States. He argues that while they criticized the structure of U.S. society, Fourierists also created a reform that closely resembled "the American dream" (122). This analysis explains much of the appeal Fourierism held for its approximately 100,000 adherents; Guarneri also claims the very elements that made the reform appealing led to its failure. With ideals like individualism, capitalism, Christianity, and nationalism, he argues, "Fourierists staked out a position too close to the American mainstream to survive" (148).

Guarneri uses Antonio Gramsci's concepts of "cultural hegemony" and "divided consciousness" to explain this notion, but does not develop this part of his analysis as fully as he might. The difficulty results from an ambiguity about Guarneri's sense of the Fourierists as a voice of dissent, "a third voice in the debate over social meaning in America" (7). In describing their "ideological ambivalence," Guarneri quotes from Jackson Lears' "The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities," (*American Historical Review* 90 [June 1985]: 567-593): " 'Subordinate groups could identify with the dominant culture—often for sound reasons—even as they sought to challenge it' " (148; Lears, 576). Guarneri wants to identify Fourierists with Lears' "subordinate groups", but this identification does not hold. Albert Brisbane, Horace Greeley, George Ripley, and Elijah P. Grant may well have formed a Gramscian "historical bloc" that aimed to achieve its own cultural hegemony (Lears, 571). They were, however, less a "subordinate group" than rather privileged members of a European-American middle class that was solidifying its own hegemony during the very period of transition Guarneri describes. A closer consideration of this class identity (and the race and gender identities that may also have motivated these men) might have allowed Guarneri to develop a more complete explanation of what Fourierist leaders had at stake when they promoted capitalism and Christianity and when they preserved "conservative stereotypes" about women (130; 121-149, *passim*).

As Lears points out, the concept of cultural hegemony contains within it an element of power; Guarneri does not develop this element as completely as he might (see Lears, 568-569). While Fourierist

leaders may well have confronted the cultural power of "mainstream" notions of what the United States should be, they also had power of their own. The choices they made as they defined the "official" scope of their reform tell the story of that power. Guarneri's narrative forms the foundation upon which any future interpretation of that story must rest, and such an interpretation must take into account his insights into Fourierists' "divided consciousness."

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American Communes to 1860; A Bibliography

PHILIP N. DARE

New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1990; vii, 203 p.; Index. (Garland Reference Library of Social Science, Vol. 347; Sects and Cults in America Bibliographical Guides, Vol. 12) \$28.00 hardcover.

A "phenomenal" resurgence of interest in communitarian studies in the past two decades motivated Philip Dare to create *American Communes to 1860: A Bibliography*. Dare updates earlier bibliographies found in such works as Arthur Bestor, Jr.'s *Backwoods Utopias* (1950); Donald D. Egbert and Stow Persons' *Socialism and American Life* (1952); and, more recently, Robert S. Fogarty's *Dictionary of American Communal and Utopian History* (1980). Intending to collate historic works as well as the results of new research on communal groups, the author has produced a bibliography that is comprehensive and supersedes previous works.

Dare's work encompasses communal groups that came into existence in the United States in the pre-Civil War years. In total, he provides 1,923 bibliographic entries for forty-seven communitarian societies, from the earliest communal groups of the seventeenth century, such as Plockhoy's Commonwealth, to such nineteenth century groups as the Amana Colonies, Brook Farm, and the Oneida Community. Citations include works in any Western language that, according to Dare, "contributed to the development of communal groups that took root on American soil."

The bibliography contains a vast array of source material that includes books and articles (the cut-off, date was June 30, 1988), manuscript collections, dissertations, theses, and other bibliogra-

phies. However, the citations are more rich and varied than the author would lead one to believe in his brief preface. Unusual yet telling sources abound throughout the work—photographs of the Bishop Hill Colony, exhibition notes commemorating the centennial of Brook Farm, and poetry by Andre Breton honoring Francois Marie Charles Fourier are but a few. The archival and primary source materials alone are a social historian's delight. Contemporary community publications, journals, letters, and reminiscences all provide a social texture which enhances any research into these communities.

For the most part, the format and organization of the bibliographic citations are clear and concise. Alphabetically listed, each community is briefly described, while each bibliographic entry is assigned a number. The book is simply arranged in two parts: one for general and collected works, and the second for the individual communities. Dare further subdivides the citations into bibliographies, archival materials, and books and articles. Although most entries are complete bibliographic units, some citations are less complete, lacking page numbers, dates, and even titles. For example, entry 955 lists "*Contemporary Education*. 58 (Winter 1987)" as the entire record. Since this entry is listed under the Harmony Society, one can only hope that the title will be self-evident.

Minor errors aside, the lack of annotations is perhaps the most cumbersome aspect in the use of Dare's bibliography. Ambiguous titles makes it difficult to define the topical nature of the entries. Titles such as "A Faithful Harvest," or "the Silent Village Lives Again" yield few clues as to the subject categories studied. Dare states that his work "is not annotated in order to save space to include more citations." Unfortunately, it is difficult to ascertain whether this is the author's self-limitation or the publisher's restriction. By comparison, Timothy Miller's sequel, *American Communes, 1860-1960, A Bibliography*, produced by the same publisher, is annotated and has 3,051 bibliographic citations, 1,128 more than Dare's work.

American Communes to 1860 is a book that can be appreciated by scholar and student alike. Not only is the work comprehensive, providing material perhaps found nowhere else, but it also updates the literature in the expanding field of communitarian studies. Dare concludes that "ultimately all any bibliographer can hope to accomplish is to provide a guide to a subject which will take other students deeper into the field or along one of the many paths that branch off." Philip Dare succeeds.

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