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Between 1967 and 1973, political activists around the globe prepared to mount a revolution. While the Vietnam War raged, calls for black power grew louder and liberation movements erupted everywhere from Africa to Western Europe. Demonstrators took to the streets, fought gun battles with police, planted bombs in public buildings and attempted to overthrow the world's most powerful governments. Rock and soul music fuelled the revolutionary movement with anthems and iconic imagery. Soon the musicians themselves, from John Lennon and Bob Dylan to James Brown and Fela Kuti, were being dragged into the fray. Some joined the protestors on the barricades; some were persecuted for their political activism; some abandoned the cause and were dismissed as counter-revolutionaries. This collision of radical fervour and musical passion touched every facet of the revolution. Peace campaigners, feminists, black liberationists, anarchists and urban terrorists joined hands with many of the most important figures in black and white music to create a revolutionary tide that threatened to alter the face of global politics, before ebbing away under the pressure of government harassment and rampant egotism.

There's A Riot Going On: Revolutionaries, Rock Stars, and the Rise and Fall of '60s Counter-Culture Details

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From Reader Review There's A Riot Going On: Revolutionaries, Rock Stars, and the Rise and Fall of '60s Counter-Culture for online ebook

Tim says

An excellent year-by-year social history of the 60s, with special focus on the intersections of politics and music. Each chapter/year covers the student/anti-Vietnam movement, civil rights & black power and women's lib in the U.S., as well as uprisings and protests around the world. Doggett is a very engaging writer, and his sober judgment and myth-deflating of events and personalities make for a fascinating read. (You'll never think of John Lennon or Mick Jagger and their cronies as icons of dissent after reading Doggett's analysis of their political naivete and/or overwhelming disinterest.) Overall, I think his task is to answer the question of what happened to all that revolutionary energy? Why did these social upheavals fail to bring about the revolution that seemed so close, and how did they disappear virtually without a trace? There are no easy answers--in-fighting and ego trips, harassment and brutality by the police and feds, but mostly I think it has to do with capitalism's ability to absorb and commoditize "revolution"--to take genuine rage at the injustice of the system and sell it back to the kids in the form of Che t-shirts and "revolutionary" rock & roll records. That answer is truly depressing, as it means that true revolution can never become a reality in this country, and that we will likely never see a time when it was as close as in the 1960s.

Sum Doood says

Yes, five stars. Unputdownable, close to fascinating if this period of history interests you, and it should, or if you simply wonder why the revolutions didn't produce many, if any, of the good changes we still need. Astonishingly well written.

Karrie says

this book was a waste of time. a discredit to the movements of the 60s. very poor research on the Black Panthers. paints musicians in a terrible light. really a terrible read as well.

Vince says

I'll give the author credit for trying to wrap together so many different concepts and actions that could loosely be labeled "youth rebellion" and try to create a coherent whole. That being said he misses the mark wildly. He bounces back and forth with no rhyme or reason and spends more time examining Prague, 1968 which really affected the left in the USA very little than he does paris 68 which did. Outside of rock music he touched very little on other US trends of the period, art, fashion etc. This is also probably the worst fact checked book i have ever seen released by a major publisher. David Peel played Washington Square not Washington State Park. Malcom X was in the Audobon Ballroom in NYC not Detroit and I'm fairly certain the United Nations is located on the East River, not Riverside Drive which is along the Hudson River. Maybe everyone fired up a doob in celebration of the 60's and just guessed.

Darcia Helle says

This book follows the counter-culture's various political movements from 1965 to 1972. Most of the information focuses on the happenings in the U.S., though Peter Doggett does touch upon other countries and how the turmoil connected. Doggett covers the Weathermen, the Black Power groups, Yippies, the start of the Women's Movement, the political activists such as Abbie Hoffman, and the musicians who got involved.

Doggett gives us insight into why the underground movements took off the way they did, as well as why many fizzled into nothing in the end. While the book is divided by year, at times Doggett jumps around in his attempt to cover a person or movement's activities. For the most part, I didn't have a problem with the format. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in the period of history that sparked an incredible amount of change in our lives.

Craig Werner says

Disappointing. Doggett falls victim to exactly the problem he identifies as the downfall of Sixties rock "revolutionaries": confusing their insular universe with the larger political landscape. There's a ton of fascinating detail about the relationship between rock musicians and the more radical wings of the movement. But Doggett's roughly as deluded about the importance of fringe elements of various Marxist groups as the musicians he criticizes. If you accept his take, A.J. Weberman (wackdoodle head of the "Dylan Liberation Front" which made Bob's life miserable for years after the singer backed off from explicitly political music) is as important as John Lennon or the MC5. I got tired of the leftist "inside baseball" even when I was learning a bit of detail. Add to that the fact that Doggett--clearly a British leftie--screws up all kinds of details about the response of the African American community to soul artists like Stevie Wonder (he'd decided that the black community rejected Stevie's cover of "Blowin' in the Wind" which is just idiotic) and I can't recommend the book. Way too many factual errors undercut the useful elements of the book. If you know the general tale of music and politics in the 60s well, you'll get something from the book. But you fundamentally can't trust it.

Liz Wollman says

Had a lot of promise but ended up being something of a scrambled mess. I gave up.

Michael D says

Functional chronological roll-call of most of the revolutionary protest groups and their actions from 1965 to 1972 that is grim to read but interesting enough. Nixon's massive landslide election win in 72 is presented as the endgame - the moment 'the man' shafted the 60's spirit conclusively and rendered so-called revolutionary figures as Hoffman, Rubin et al meaningless.

Allen Ginsberg's quote sums up the author's view nicely it seems - "More and more, by hindsight, I think all

of our activity in the late sixties may have prolonged the Vietnam war."

Tosh says

We just got this in the bookstore. The American edition is now released, and it looks very interesting. Right now reading Richard Brody's crit-bio on Jean-Luc Godard and even though I was a little tot, I remember the late 60's being such an interesting era in radical politics of all sorts and stripes. Godard was one of the main figures in that era, as well as a cast of thousands.

I think what's so sad right now is the mass population (at least in America) is so conservative in its thinking and actions. There was a spirit of 'let's try it' in the 60's that is totally lacking in today's culture and world. I miss the taste of adventure and debate.

Ari says

The challenge reading something like this is not having a stand-alone knowledge base to work off of that matches the scope that the book covers. That being said: I learned a lot.

I would love to see something like this written post-2016; the parallels seem too clear to ignore.

Simon says

The author came of age in the early 1970s, during the beginning of the perceived decline of the hippie subculture which I guess kinda informs his perspective in many ways. In a way, the book does almost as much to de-romanticize that era as Hunter Thompson's "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas" and Thomas Pynchon's "Inherent Vice". Many of the people involved in the countercultural movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s come across as either incredibly naïve, downright hypocritical or just giving up very quickly... if not some combination of all three.

It's really long and insanely well-researched, apparently having interviewed almost everyone who was historically important to that era in the US/UK... yet it still comes across as way too short. Part of the problem is that the author's conclusions in the end are rather confused, and I'm not sure exact lessons he meant to draw from it all in the end. Another major issue is how intensely he again concentrates on the US/UK and occasionally also France. It would have been really interesting to see that kind of in-depth coverage of what was going on in for example Germany. There the equivalent subcultures were much more radical both politically (e. g. the Baader-Meinhof Group) and artistically (e. g. krautrock), for rather obvious reasons, and I'm not even sure if either got as much as a mention.

I guess I have to judge this book a noble failure, just like its subject matter!

Chris says

This is a compelling and detailed history of politics and music of the sixties and their relationship.

What I found limited was its overall emphasis on failure, as if "the revolution" should have been achieved - and sustained. I want to hear about how ongoing all those innovations have also been: the way it has changed many aspects of global culture indelibly. How positive many of those changes have been.

To use an analogy: just because we brought the flowers and the songs to the wedding didn't mean we guaranteed there would be no divorce! Let's start over!

Matti Karjalainen says

Peter Doggettin erinomainen "There's a Riot Going On" käsittelee vuosien 1966-1972 vallankumouksellista ilmapiiriä, yhteiskunnallisia-poliittisia ja kulttuurillisia aatesuuntauksia ja kaiken taustalla soivaa populaarimusiikkia.

Teoksessa käsitellään aihetta laajasti: palstatilaa saavat niin mustien kansalaisoikeustaistelu, Vietnamin sotaa vastustanut liikehdintä kuin feministien ja homoseksuaalien käymä kamppailu omien oikeuksiensa puolesta. Vähän yli viidensadan sivun aikana lukijalle tulevat tutuksi niin Bob Dylan, Mick Jagger, John Lennon, Huey Newton, A.J. Weberman, Bobby Seale, Angela Davis, Jerry Rubin, Phil Ochs, John Sinclair kuin Abbie Hoffmankin, unohtamatta kymmeniä muita aikakauden enemmän tai vähemmän mieleenpainuneita vaikuttajia tai Weather Undergroundin ja Mustien panterien kaltaisia radikaaleja liikkeitä.

"There's a Riot Going Onin" parissa ei pääse pitkästymään, sen verran mielenkiintoisesti kirjailija johdattaa lukijaansa läpi vuosien, joiden piiriin voi mahdollistaa niin Montereyn hippinunelman kuin mitalin varjoisammankin puolen, johon kuuluivat Charles Manson, Kent State University kuin Altamontkin.

Doggett ei välttämättä tuo esille mitään sellaista mistä jo aikaisemmin ei olisi kirjoitettu, mutta yhdistää erilaisia teemoja kiinnostavasti samojen kansien väliin ja tuo esille monia mielenkiintoisia näkökulmia mm. hippiliikkeen suhtautumisesta naispuolisiin jäseniinsä.

Vaikka kirjan pääpaino onkin USA:ssa ja osin myös Englannissa, se tekee kirja mielenkiintoisia syrjähyppyjä muun muassa Tšekkoslovakiaan, Brasiliaan, Irlantiin, Chileen ja Meksikoon. Kotoista Vanhan valtausta ei sentään mainita.

Ehdotonta luettavaa kaikille aikakaudesta ja sen musiikista kiinnostuneille!

Phil Brett says

A highly enjoyable look at the high point of sixties rebellion and its relationship with the counter culture and musicians of varying sincerity. The story is a complex brew of brave rebellion, of the oppressed and exploited fighting back alongside confused politics, often surreal, sometimes tragic events - set to a thumping musical soundtrack.

(As an aside, folks might be interested in this humble effort by me:

<http://culturematters.org.uk/index.ph...>)

Justin says

This was a good, but not great, survey of the ongoing dialog (for lack of a better term) between the music community and the peace/civil rights movement between the mid-60s through 1972. Doggett carefully avoids lionizing his subjects - Rubin, Hoffman, Dylan, Lennon, etc. - and is **extremely** critical (for good reason) of the lack of attention gave to the feminist and gay rights movements by the rock community. Kudos also are due for not restricting to the traditional rock cannon, but also touching on such key jazz figures as Charlie Haden and Archie Shepp. That said, although clearly a lot of effort went into writing this book, it wasn't overly revelatory. There are lots of interesting anecdotes, but the big takeaway is the counter-culture erred in counting on the support of musicians. I'm not sure this required a 500+ page book to explain.
