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STONEY BURNS AND DALLAS NOTES:
COVERING THE DALLAS COUNTERCULTURE,
1967-1970

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
University of North Texas in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

By

Bonnie Alice Lovell, B.A.

Denton, Texas

August, 1999

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Stoney Burns (Brent LaSalle Stein) edited and published Dallas Notes, a Dallas, Texas, underground newspaper, from November 1967 through September 1970. This thesis considers whether Burns was the unifying figure in the Dallas counterculture.

Chapter I is the introduction. Chapter II looks at the United States and Dallas in the Sixties and the rise of the underground press. Chapter III discusses the founding of Notes from the Underground: The SMU Off-Campus Free Press at Southern Methodist University by Doug D. Baker, Jr.; Roy Bartee Haile, Jr.; and Nancy Lynne Brown. Chapter IV looks at Burns and Notes under his editorship, Notes's coverage of issues, its role in the Dallas counterculture, its relationship with Dallas, its demise, and also briefly discusses the Iconoclast, the alternative newspaper Baker published until 1977 and where Burns worked until 1973. Chapter V is the conclusion.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

There was never any doubt when I chose a thesis topic that my subject would come from the tumultuous 1960s. While they lasted, the Sixties were perplexing and complex. Even today they have the power to haunt and mystify historians and writers who search for and debate the meaning of what happened there. It did not seem that there was any part of the Sixties, however, that had not been studied and analyzed and dissected to death. Vietnam and the anti-war movement and the various movements for social change of the 1960s have been covered extensively. With my interest in cultural history, I began to focus on the counterculture of the 1960s, a contrarian culture that flared up in decided opposition to the established norms of American life. The counterculture was, however, still too unmanageable a topic; it was necessary to narrow my focus further.

The underground newspapers that served the counterculture were a natural subject for me, given my interest in newspapers and my many years of newspaper experience. There are several histories of the underground press movement. By far the two best were written by veterans of the underground newspaper movement who have joined the mainstream. David Armstrong, a former editor of

the underground Berkeley Barb, who now writes about the media, wrote A Trumpet to Arms: Alternative Media in America; and Abe Peck, formerly an editor of the underground Chicago Seed, now a professor at the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University, wrote Uncovering the Sixties: The Life & Times of the Underground Press. Their books join thorough research with their own first-hand accounts. Two earlier studies, Robert J. Glessing's The Underground Press in America and Laurence Leamer's The Paper Revolutionaries: The Rise of the Underground Press, which came out in 1970 and 1972 respectively, suffer from having been written at what turned out to be the peak of and the beginning of the decline of the underground press phenomenon and so lack the distance needed for historical perspective; the counterculture and underground newspapers were in transition, and it still was not clear what the outcome would be. In addition to the histories of the underground press, numerous underground newspapers with a stable life span are available on microfilm, leaving for the historical record a view of a tumultuous decade as seen from inside the kaleidoscope.

Living in the Dallas area, it seemed equally natural for me to focus on the Dallas counterculture and Dallas's main underground newspaper. The study of the counterculture in cities not generally regarded as hip has been largely overlooked, yet the existence of the counterculture in

cities with no history of bohemianism or dissent is worth study, precisely because it is such an anomaly. Although there is rich source material, the study of the counterculture in cities other than San Francisco and New York is a largely overlooked area of local history. Besides the Underground Newspaper Collection, which was microfilmed by Bell & Howell, there are bound volumes of some of the newspapers available in libraries. The people who were centrally involved in the counterculture are still relatively young and so, in many cases, are available for interviews.

I chose to concentrate on the years between 1967 and 1970, the peak years of the counterculture outside its West and East Coast origins. By 1967, the counterculture had spread from San Francisco and New York and had taken root in communities across the United States, including Dallas. After 1970, the counterculture was on the wane, while at the same time elements of the counterculture were being absorbed more and more into the culture at large. From the cultural to the political, signs of the counterculture's influence on the mainstream were much in evidence.

By 1967, Dallas had an underground newspaper, Notes from the Underground: The SMU Off-Campus Free Press, later called Dallas Notes, which gives us documentation of the spirit of the times from a countercultural perspective. The published histories of underground newspapers focus on the

larger papers based on the East and West Coasts with their larger, longer-established, more visible hippie communities. When the Dallas underground newspaper was mentioned in the books about the underground press, it was to itemize the run-ins of editor and publisher Stoney Burns with the Dallas Police Department. The one thesis written about Dallas's underground newspaper, by then called the Iconoclast and an alternative newspaper, was a 1976 readership survey conducted when the counterculture was fizzling out, although the thesis does include a sketchy history of the newspaper.

When I told people I was writing about the Dallas counterculture, the name Stoney Burns came up over and over again. Everywhere I went, everyone I talked to asked the same question: "Have you talked to Stoney Burns?" No matter which side of the spectrum they had been on in the Sixties, everybody remembered Stoney Burns, who joined the Notes staff in May 1967, edited it from November 1967 to September 1970, and continued to be associated with its successor, the Iconoclast, until 1973. Thus I began to focus on the man everyone who remembers Dallas in the Sixties associates with that era--Stoney Burns, a name that still resonates in people's memories thirty years later. Was Stoney Burns the unifying figure for the Dallas counterculture? That was the question I sought to answer.

Chapter II describes the mood of America in the Sixties and the rise of the counterculture and consequent

mushrooming of the underground press. It moves on to the mood of Dallas in the Sixties and goes on briefly to chronicle the founding of Dallas's first underground newspaper, Notes from the Underground, a paper which went on to be, under several name changes and editor flip-flops, Dallas's longest-running underground newspaper, lasting for ten years.

Chapter III chronicles the birth of Notes at Southern Methodist University and the role of Doug D. Baker, Jr., who, along with Roy Bartee Haile, Jr., and Nancy Lynne Brown, founded it.

Chapter IV focuses on Stoney Burns, who was born Brent LaSalle Stein; his tenure at Notes; his role in the Dallas counterculture; his battles with the Dallas Establishment; and the demise of Notes. It briefly looks at Burns, Baker, and the Iconoclast in the years after Notes.

Chapter V attempts to answer the question: Was Stoney Burns the unifying figure for the Dallas counterculture?

CHAPTER II

AMERICA AND THE SIXTIES COUNTERCULTURE:

"SOMETHING IS HAPPENING HERE, BUT YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS"

Only to the most farsighted observer would the year 1960 foreshadow that the decade being ushered in would be anything more than an extension of the placid, prosperous 1950s, a decade seemingly marred only by the looming presence of Communism and the Bomb. The 1960s were, in fact, the logical extension of the 1950s, although not in the way America expected in the heady optimism of those postwar years. Just as there was more to the apparently bland 1950s than met the eye, so did events of 1960 contain the seeds of unsettling political and social changes that would rock the country before the decade ended.¹

The year 1960 was punctuated with isolated events that signified new beginnings and which, taken as a whole, signified some change in the air. The moribund Student League for Industrial Democracy was reborn as Students for

¹David Halberstam, The Fifties (New York: Villard Books, 1993), ix-xi, 799; and Andrew Jamison and Ron Eyerman, Seeds of the Sixties (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1994, xi-xii, 1-2, 24-29, 209-214, 220-223.

a Democratic Society.² Four African-American students sat deliberately at a whites-only lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina, and waited to be served, challenging the South's entrenched system of segregation. Women could buy the Pill for the first time. Brent LaSalle Stein graduated from Hillcrest High School in Dallas.³ Harvard University professor Timothy Leary had his first hallucinogenic experience in Cuernavaca, Mexico.⁴ Democrat John F. Kennedy was elected president, defeating Republican Vice President Richard Nixon, who returned to private life in California. The number of American military advisors in Vietnam more than doubled, but they were still fewer than 900 by year's end, up from 342 at the beginning of the year.⁵

Then the turbulent, traumatic time now known as the Sixties erupted violently with shots fired on 22 November 1963 in Dallas, Texas, shots indelibly impressed on the American psyche. For the first time in most Americans'

²James Miller, "Democracy Is in the Streets:" From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 38; and Kirkpatrick Sale, SDS (New York: Random House, 1973), 16-17.

³Brent LaSalle Stein, interview by Bonnie Lovell (Dallas, Texas, 28 April 1998), University of North Texas Oral History Collection, OH 1241 (Denton, Texas: University of North Texas Oral History Program, 1998), 2.

⁴Timothy Leary, Flashbacks: A Personal and Cultural History of an Era; An Autobiography, with a Foreword by William S. Burroughs (New York: A Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam Book, 1983, 1990), 31-33; and Martin A. Lee and Bruce Shlain, Acid Dreams: The CIA, LSD and the Sixties Rebellion (New York: Grove Press, 1985), 73.

⁵The Vietnam War: An Almanac, ed. John S. Bowman, with an introduction by Fox Butterfield (New York: World Almanac Publications, 1985), 48, 50.

living memory, a president was assassinated. By the end of the decade, more assassinations served as accelerating reminders that something was wrong somewhere. Not since the Great Depression of the Thirties had it felt so entirely possible that the structure of American society was breaking down.⁶

It was not just the assassinations that gave many Americans the uneasy sense that something was dangerously out of kilter--it was also the sit-ins and demonstrations and riots and marches and occupation of public buildings. Folk singer Bob Dylan sang, "Something is happening here, but you don't know what it is, do you, Mr. Jones?" All sorts of disturbing things were happening in the Sixties, and Mr. and Mrs. Joneses all across Middle America didn't know what was happening here.

Besides political shock waves, there were cultural upheavals announced by be-ins and love-ins and happenings. A small, colorful group of people, mostly young, white, well-educated, and middle-class, brought into question everything the Joneses held dear. One could not miss the hippies,⁷ or "freaks," a derogatory name they latched onto proudly. Their

⁶Charles Kaiser, 1968 in America: Music, Politics, Chaos, Counterculture, and the Shaping of a Generation (New York: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1988), xv.

⁷The term "hippie" derives from the slang word "hip," meaning "in the know; aware; or in style." Hippie came into widespread use in the mid-1960s to describe someone who adopted unconventional styles of living and dress, used hallucinogenic drugs, and rejected many of the tenets of American society.

long, flowing, flower-adorned hair, colorful love beads, and flamboyant, exotic clothing stood in marked contrast to the conformity of dress that characterized the Fifties. But most important, the members of what came to be called the counterculture questioned American values:

They are asking the all-consuming questions of life: What is the nature of God? What is the nature of man's relationship to God and of man to man? They are asking, in the final analysis, what is the nature of justice. What is the nature of justice in Southeast Asia? What is the nature of justice in the ghetto? What is the nature of justice in race relations?^a

They found their answers in myriad places, embracing lifestyles and politics that were an in-your-face flouting of decent, respectable, middle-class values.

Hippies were a decided minority, but their flamboyance made them seem larger than life. They were popping up everywhere, and they were, or seemed, uncommonly threatening to American society just by their very existence. Hippies scorned the materialism that was the centerpiece of the postwar American consumer society, often putting their beliefs into practice by living in communal settings. They were against war, especially the Vietnam War, and to mainstream America that translated into being anti-American. They raised their voices against the inequities and hypocrisies they saw in American life. They championed the

^aRichard G. Gray, introduction to The Underground Press in America, by Robert J. Glessing (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1970), xiii.

rights of oppressed minorities. They used hallucinogenic drugs to expand their minds, preached and practiced free love, and dressed eccentrically in what looked like costumes--as Edwardian dandies or gypsies or whatever struck their fancies. They even had their own music--music that was evocative of the psychedelic-drug experience both in its mind-bending sound and its lyrics, music which became synonymous with an era. A feeling quickly developed of "us" against "them" with "straight"⁹ society--corporate America, the government, the Establishment--versus those who opposed its values.

Confronted with what at first seemed more like a fad than a social phenomenon, newspapers, owned by and reflecting the views of an economic elite, did what they had always done with minorities and economically disenfranchised groups--they ignored them, or, through the way they wrote about them, tended to denigrate them, reflecting, and helping to shape, the opinions of Middle America. When they wrote about hippies, they never quite knew what to make of them other than a passing novelty. They overlooked and underestimated the serious questions underlying the hippie lifestyle. Biases and lack of objectivity were obvious in their reporting. This new minority of "freaks" only made the

⁹Within the counterculture, "straight" refers to a non-drug user and, by extension, to people who follow the conventions of society.

newspapers when the news about them was negative.¹⁰

In response, an underground press, small but vocal, arose to serve this ignored segment of the population. Its purpose was to deliver news that spoke to the hippie community's needs and interests. All across the country underground newspapers sprang up, and "street people and hippies, drug addicts and poor whites joined with college students, black militants, poets and intellectuals to create a new coalition of readers for the alternative medium."¹¹ Overlooked by and alienated from the mainstream press, this new audience read underground newspapers to get news, information, and coverage of its community and interests that traditional newspapers were not providing. Counterculture members also wanted to read editorial opinions that mirrored their own unpopular, anti-Establishment views.¹²

The designation "underground" did not come from the sense of being clandestine, like the underground newspapers of the French Resistance during World War II.¹³ The underground newspapers of the 1960s were legal and were protected by the First Amendment guarantee of freedom of the press; editors and readers could not be jailed just for

¹⁰Ben H. Bagdikian, The Media Monopoly, 4th ed. (Boston: Beacon Press), 47; and Robert J. Glessing, The Underground Press in America (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1970), 6.

¹¹Glessing, Underground Press in America, 12.

¹²Ibid., 5-6; and Abe Peck, Uncovering the Sixties: The Life and Times of the Underground Press (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), xiv.

¹³Peck, Uncovering the Sixties, 39.

publishing or reading the sheets, although it must have seemed otherwise to underground newspaper editors and staffers who were regularly under surveillance and were harassed by authorities.¹⁴ Instead, "underground" referred to the newspapers' anti-Establishment politics, as well as to their celebration of drug use, which, because of its illegality, was an activity that necessarily had to remain "underground."¹⁵

The newspaper that served as a prototype for the underground newspapers of the Sixties was New York's Village Voice, which started publishing in 1955 in Greenwich Village, the birthplace of the Beat Generation. The Village Voice began as a reaction to the stodgy coverage provided by the other Greenwich Village newspaper, the Villager, and to the non-existent coverage of the Beats by the New York daily newspapers. The Village Voice was the first newspaper to give Beat poets, writers, and critics a printed outlet for their writing. It was also the first newspaper to write positively about hallucinogenic drugs with a 1961 story about a psilocybin trip. When it printed the name of Ed Sanders's

¹⁴Geoffrey Rips, Unamerican Activities: The Campaign Against the Underground Press, PEN American Center Report, with a Foreword by Allen Ginsberg, ed. Anne Janowitz with Nancy J. Peters (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1981), 45.

¹⁵David Armstrong, A Trumpet to Arms: Alternative Media in America, with a Foreword by Ben H. Bagdikian (Los Angeles: J.P. Tarcher, 1981), 33; Glessing, Underground Press in America, 3; and Laurence Leamer, The Paper Revolutionaries: The Rise of the Underground Press (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), 19.

magazine, Fuck You, a Magazine of the Arts in 1962, the Voice earned the distinction of being the first newspaper to print a word previously deemed unprintable. By the mid-1960s, the Voice was practically middle-of-the-road, but just as the beatniks were the spiritual forebears of the hippies, the Village Voice, with its nonconformist content, irreverent style, and freewheeling writing, was the progenitor of the underground press, which flowered a decade later.¹⁶

As early as 1956, Norman Mailer, writing in the paper he helped found, sensed what was about to erupt: "I feel the hints, the clues, the whisper of a new time coming. There is a universal rebellion in the air" ¹⁷ But although the Voice was a forerunner for the deluge of underground newspapers that followed, it was as different from the underground newspapers of the Sixties as the beatniks, with their cool jazz and their cerebral rejection of American mores, were from the hippies, with their passionate brand of rebellion.

A fermenting social and political climate combined with technological innovations in the early 1960s to make the rise of underground newspapers possible. The advent and widespread availability of offset printing made producing

¹⁶Ibid., 12-14; Armstrong, Trumpet to Arms, 42; Leamer, Paper Revolutionaries, 21-23; and Kevin Michael McAuliffe, The Great American Newspaper: The Rise and Fall of the Village Voice (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1978), 12, 68, 230.

¹⁷McAuliffe, Great American Newspaper, 40.

small newspapers easy and cheap.¹⁸

The first true underground newspaper with a distinctive Sixties feel was the Los Angeles Free Press, which appeared in May 1964. Although it got off to a slow start, the growth of the Free Press, or Freep, as it was commonly known, astounded its editor, increasing from an eight-page paper whose first issue was 5,000 copies, most of which were given away, to a forty- to sixty-four-page newspaper with a documented paid circulation of 90,000 by 1971, down from a high of 95,000 two years before. This circulation made it the largest underground newspaper in the United States, as well as the second-largest weekly newspaper of all types, the Voice being the largest.¹⁹

Like the growth of the Freep, the growth of the underground press was slow at first--a few newspapers started each year until in 1966 six underground papers banded together to form the Underground Press Syndicate. By early 1967 there were only twenty or so underground newspapers in the United States, but by 1968 and 1969 there were around 500 underground newspapers, not including high school underground

¹⁸Armstrong, Trumpet to Arms, 32; Glessing, Underground Press in America, 41-42; and Peck, Uncovering the Sixties, 21.

¹⁹Armstrong, Trumpet to Arms, 31-32; Everette E. Dennis and William L. Rivers, Other Voices: The New Journalism in America (San Francisco: Canfield Press, 1974), 138; Glessing, Underground Press in America, 17-18; Leamer, Paper Revolutionaries, 27-28; and Peck, Uncovering the Sixties, 183.

newspapers. By 1970 that number was down to between approximately 400 to 460 underground newspapers in the United States, with a total circulation estimated at between two million and nearly five million and an estimated pass-along readership of as high as thirty million. Many of the papers were sporadic and short-lived, existing for only a few issues. A substantial number of underground newspapers, however, lasted for at least part of the heady duration of the underground press' heyday, roughly from 1968 to 1973. These underground newspapers constituted what Laurence Leamer, in his 1972 look at the still vital movement, The Paper Revolutionaries, called the counterculture's "only broad, unifying institution"--the underground press.²⁰

The counterculture was not monolithic, however, so although the underground press may have served as a unifying institution, the counterculture did not have a broad, unifying vision. There wasn't just one agreed-upon belief system common to all members of the counterculture nor one set of political beliefs to ascribe to people with long hair, despite the fears of Middle America. Instead, many different threads made up the counterculture, threads that entwined at times along the way, but then moved apart. The

²⁰Armstrong, Trumpet to Arms, 59-60; Thomas King Forcade, Introduction to The Underground Reader, Assembled by Mel Howard and Thomas King Forcade (New York: A Plume Book, New American Library, 1972), 1; Glessing, Underground Press in America, xiv-xv, 6,10; and Leamer, Paper Revolutionaries, 44.

counterculture consisted of both those for whom revolutionary political action was the main motivation and those who only wanted to get stoned or "get laid."²¹ Leamer found that "[their] only common link is allegiance to the heady pastiche of pot, peace, Panthers, rock, antiwar, anti-imperialism, anarchism and Marxism that is the contemporary 'Movement.' . . . no one could possibly devise a structure to encompass this Movement."²²

The underground press reflected that range of beliefs and interests. It served an audience that included serious political activists and serious psychedelic trippers, partisans of the New Left and partakers of LSD, the so-called political revolutionaries and the cultural revolutionaries. Some underground papers, especially the earliest ones, were more cultural than political. They wrote about psychedelic drugs, sex, acid rock, and cosmic truths, and they illustrated their pages with colorful, experimental graphics that looked like the artist's vision on an acid trip. Later papers, especially as the Vietnam War heated up, were more likely to be serious and political, although most of them always had a cultural component, reporting on aspects of counterculture life that mainstream newspapers ignored or disparaged by biases in their reporting, biases not readily apparent because they reflected the values of the established

²¹A slang term meaning to have sex.

²²Leamer, Paper Revolutionaries, 13.

social order and so went unnoticed and unquestioned by most newspaper readers.²³

Underground newspapers were decidedly different from traditional newspapers, not only in how they looked but in how they handled news. While mainstream newspapers stressed accuracy, underground newspapers at times played fast and loose with facts. Underground newspapers and their readers did not believe something was true just because some official source said so, and they didn't necessarily always place a high value on facts, because they believed that facts could be used to conceal the truth. Raymond Mungo, writing about his experiences at the Liberation News Service, a leftist news service that provided press packets to underground newspapers, said, "We were not sticklers for accuracy-- neither is the underground press in general, so be advised. . . ." He pointed out a belief common to the underground press: "Facts are less important than truth and the two are far from equivalent. . . ." ²⁴

Besides being skeptical about what traditional newspapers reported, underground newspapers were also critical of what they did not report. Marty Glass, writing in San Francisco's underground Dock of the Bay in 1969,

²³Dennis and Rivers, Others Voices, 139; Glessing, Underground Press in America, 60-61, 65; Leamer, Paper Revolutionaries, 43-44; and Peck, Uncovering the Sixties, 57-59.

²⁴Raymond Mungo, Famous Long Ago: My Life and Hard Times with Liberation News Service ([Boston], Beacon Press, 1970; New York: Pocket Books, 1971), 67.

described news that was not being reported in daily newspapers:

The real news is that cops who murder black men are given medals and a guy with two joints gets ten years.

The real news is that guys are being forced to kill their brothers in Vietnam. . . .

The real news is that Huey Newton is in jail and Richard Nixon isn't. . . .²⁵

Another difference between underground and aboveground newspaper coverage was apparent in how they dealt with the crucial issues of the era. Underground papers made no pretense at the objectivity that is one of the hallmarks of the modern mainstream press. According to Richard G. Gray in his introduction to The Underground Press in America, "the underground papers openly practice deliberate bias as an integral part of their creed."²⁶ They were rabble-rousers for the various causes they espoused. End the war. Now! Black Power. Now! Legalize marijuana. Now! Jim Morrison and the Doors sang, "We want the world, and we want it now!" and they spoke for a disaffected portion of a generation.

The Vietnam War was perhaps the pivotal event of the age--it affected everything. It divided the country more than anything since the Civil War; it even brought down a president--President Lyndon Johnson did not seek a second elected term because of how divided America was over the war.

²⁵Marty Glass, "What's News," Dock of the Bay, 18 August 1969, 4, cited in Glessing, Underground Press in America, 110.

²⁶Gray, introduction to Glessing, Underground Press in America, xiv.

Coverage of Vietnam by the underground press was frankly political and adversarial. Unlike the mainstream press, which believed what the government said about Vietnam, at least at first, underground newspapers did not believe government press releases and statements. They doubted, they questioned, and they included their doubts and their questions in their coverage. The editorial pages of the mainstream press by and large supported the war in its early years, but the radical press was against it from the start--not just against it, but against it with a vengeance.

The movements for social change and social justice and equality for minorities were the pressing domestic issues of the day. Again, underground newspapers took sides, advocating and agitating for nothing short of revolutionary social changes.

Besides their reporting on serious issues, underground newspapers reported on the social and cultural aspects of underground lifestyles, things which were underreported or misunderstood by the mainstream press. The underground press both reported on the counterculture and was an integral part of the counterculture. Unlike reporters in the traditional press, who were observers, underground press writers were participants in what they covered. There was no question of their objectivity. Reporters for the underground press shared experiences and shared "joints" of marijuana with the people they covered in a way a reporter for the New York

Times or San Francisco Chronicle or the Dallas Morning News never could. Leamer wrote about the difficulties confronting journalists trying to cover the counterculture:

Aboveground journalists have a very difficult time reporting about youth culture and radical politics. Because of the fear over who they are and what they may do with the information, no one wants anything to do with them. And thus a reporter has to be very careful in evaluating what information he does get. He is always being approached by "jive artists" who love to put him on, and "speed freaks" and others full of incredible stories--stories as convincing as they are false.²⁷

Ben H. Bagdikian believes that without the underground newspapers, "much of the message of the 1960s would have been lost."²⁸ To Glessing, the underground press was "the visible expression of cultural revolution in America."²⁹ Indeed, its coverage of the social and cultural side of the counterculture is perhaps the most remarkable legacy of the underground press.

Even fundamentalist, conservative, business-controlled Dallas, located squarely in the Bible Belt, was not immune to the winds of change sweeping the country in the Sixties. There were hippies, and all that that implied, right in right-thinking, God-fearing, right-leaning Dallas, Texas. Dallas in the Sixties was a bastion of conservatism. Conservative financial and commercial interests dominated the Dallas economy, and the conservative Citizens Council ruled

²⁷Leamer, Paper Revolutionaries, 187.

²⁸Bagdikian, Foreword to Trumpet to Arms, 12.

²⁹Glessing, Underground Press in America, 38.

Dallas politics.³⁰ Citizens Council president J. Erik Jonsson became the Dallas mayor less than three months after Kennedy's assassination and remained in office until 1971. Local figures such as Congressman Bruce Alger, Congressman Joe Pool, retired General Edwin Walker, and oil billionaire H.L. Hunt fueled a political climate of virulent anti-liberalism. William Manchester, in his book The Death of a President wrote, "Rightist enthusiasm was a civic responsibility, like the Dallas Council of Churches and the Dallas Cowboys. . . ." ³¹

Even before the Kennedy assassination, Dallas had felt the sting of negative national publicity for its right-leaning tendencies after angry crowds jostled Democratic Senator Lyndon B. Johnson and his wife in 1960 and spat upon Adlai Stevenson, the United States Ambassador to the United Nations, and hit him with a sign only a month before Kennedy was killed.³² After Kennedy's assassination, Dallas had reeled again from criticism of that extreme conservatism. To the world at large, the mood of Dallas was somehow to blame for the assassination, and the international press excoriated Dallas. Dallasites knew that charge was ridiculous, but the city did tone down some of its more rabid incantations after

³⁰Warren Leslie, Dallas: Public and Private, Aspects of an American City (New York: Grossman Publishers, 1964), 63-69, 76-77.

³¹William Manchester, The Death of a President: November 20-November 25, 1963 (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), 45.

³²Leslie, Dallas, 179-186; 188-198.

the assassination.

Dallas was then a two-newspaper city, with the Dallas Morning News and the afternoon Dallas Times-Herald. Publisher and board chairman, E.M. ("Ted") Dealey, headed the Dallas Morning News. Although the News had once been known for a moderate, responsible editorial stance, having been responsible for running the Ku Klux Klan out of town in the 1930s, Ted Dealey moved the News far to the right. Manchester commented, "As the most venerable voice in Dallas, the News, under Dealey's leadership, had made radical extremism reputable in the early 1960's."³³ Indeed, some observers felt, the News had done more than make rightist extremism reputable; they blamed the News's editorial page, under editorial director Dick West, for creating Dallas's mood of hatemongering. Although the Dallas Morning News was the more conservative paper by far, the Dallas Times-Herald could hardly be called liberal.³⁴

The Morning News and the Times-Herald, in a failure common to the national mainstream press, at first ignored the small Dallas hippie population both as a potential reading audience and as subject matter. Later they became vitriolic in their attacks on what they perceived as nothing less than a threat to Western civilization. A Dallas journalist, who was involved with the local coverage of one of the Dallas

³³Manchester, Death of a President, 48.

³⁴Leslie, Dallas, 152-164.

papers during those years and who insisted on anonymity, said, "A bunch of hippies--it was like saying a bunch of Communists," in explaining the major Dallas newspapers' attitudes toward the counterculture.³⁵ But their oversight was about to be remedied.

At Southern Methodist University, a small, expensive, conservative, private liberal arts school, an alternative to the officially sanctioned SMU Campus sprang up, Notes from the Underground: The SMU Off-Campus Press. Southern Methodist University students Doug D. Baker, Jr., Roy Barte Haile, Jr., and Nancy Lynne Brown started Notes. The first issue of five pages, which was surreptitiously photocopied at Texas Instruments, came out on 17 March 1967. After two issues, the Student Senate granted Notes \$200 to help defray printing costs.³⁶ In May, Brent LaSalle Stein, a salesman for his father's printing company and an SMU fraternity advisor, joined the staff to help with graphics, using the nom de guerre Stoney Burns. Thus began a partnership that would provide Dallas with an underground newspaper through the years of the Dallas counterculture. It didn't take long for Baker and Burns to broaden their sights beyond "the

³⁵Unnamed Dallas journalist, telephone interview by author, 1 March 1995.

³⁶Doug D. Baker, Jr., interview by Richard H. Wells, Dallas, Texas, 23 May 1974, cited in Richard H. Wells, "The Iconoclast: A Readership Survey and a Study of the Historical Evolution of an Underground Newspaper" (Master's thesis, North Texas State University, 1976), 21; and Notes, 6 April 1967

Hilltop," as SMU was known. They went from wrestling with the university powers to taking on the entire Dallas Establishment.³⁷ During the fall semester of 1967, SMU threw the off-campus paper off campus.

In November 1967, Baker turned over the activities of the paper he had co-founded to Burns and in 1968 left Dallas to work in California. Burns changed the paper's name to Dallas Notes and kept publishing, despite official and unofficial resistance. In early 1970, Baker returned to Dallas from California and co-edited Notes, which was beset with staff dissension, until Burns asked him to leave. In August 1970, Baker founded Dallas News, which he published every other week, with Dallas News appearing in the weeks that Notes did not publish. Thus, for several months, Dallas had an underground newspaper published every week.³⁸

Meanwhile, Notes endured staff conflict and factional disputes, and finally folded not long after Burns left in September 1970. Burns moved to Austin to help start an underground paper, Lone Star Dispatch, there, but he soon returned to Dallas where he went to work as art director for Dallas News. Under the pressure of a lawsuit brought by the Dallas Morning News, which felt the underground paper's name was too close for comfort, the Dallas News became the

³⁷Wells, "Iconoclast", 21-23.

³⁸Ibid., 20, 30.

Iconoclast,³⁹ the name taken from freethinking, Baptist-battling William Cowper Brann's early Texas newspaper. Burns stepped down as art director in March 1973 and started a free music magazine, Buddy. Baker continued publishing the Iconoclast until March 1977, ten years to the month he founded Notes. At various times, especially in 1970, Dallas had other underground newspapers, but all proved short-lived. The Iconoclast, like other underground papers that lasted, evolved over the years to become more serious and more professional, appearing weekly by 1971, paving the way for the weekly alternative newspaper, the Dallas Observer.

Over a period of ten years--sometimes together and sometimes separately, sometimes in competition, or as Baker hoped, complementing the other's paper, Baker and Burns published and edited the two longest-running Dallas underground newspapers, papers that the publishers later saw as one entity--Dallas's longest-running, continuously published underground newspaper. Although Baker co-founded Dallas's first underground newspaper and edited its last for more than twice as long as Burns headed Notes, it was Stoney Burns who edited Dallas Notes during the primary years of the Dallas counterculture, from 1967 to 1970, and it was Stoney Burns who bore the brunt of official Dallas's hatred.

The year 1968 marked a turning point both for America

³⁹Baker interview by Wells, 6 September 1974, cited in Wells, "Iconoclast," 32.

and for the counterculture. "It was the year when the sensitivities and nerve ends of millions of Americans were assaulted almost beyond bearing," wrote political journalist Jules Witcover in The Year the Dream Died: Revisiting 1968 in America, his month-by-month examination of that awful, exciting year, many of whose political events he had covered as a journalist.⁴⁰ The year began violently with the Tet offensive. Communist forces streamed into seemingly impregnable Saigon and previously untouched cities across South Vietnam during a lunar new year cease-fire, stunning an American public, which had been assured that could not happen. Respected CBS television news anchorman Walter Cronkite spoke for much of America when he blurted out, "What the hell is going on? I thought we were winning the war."⁴¹ At least some ordinary Americans began to wonder if perhaps the antiwar protestors had a point. The violence only got worse with the assassinations of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Sen. Robert F. Kennedy within a two-month period. In August, television news footage from outside the Democratic National Convention in Chicago showed protestors and newsmen being beaten by the Chicago police and National Guardsmen. Although an official investigation called it a "police riot," mainstream America was disgusted by the demonstrators and

⁴⁰Jules Witcover, The Year the Dream Died: Revisiting 1968 in America (New York: Warner Books, 1997), xiii.

⁴¹Arthur Kaul, "The Unraveling of America," in The Press in Times of Crisis, ed. Lloyd Chiasson, Jr., Contributions to the Study of Mass Media and Communications, no. 48 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press), 182.

supported the police. The silent majority resoundingly elected Richard Nixon president, but doubts about the war were no longer condemned out of hand as un-American.

When perhaps half a million people traveled to New York to attend the Woodstock Music and Art Fair in August 1969, they didn't realize it would be a coda to the Sixties. In the last month of the decade, Hell's Angels motorcycle club members guarding the stage beat an African-American man to death at a free Rolling Stones concert at Altamont Speedway in California, and a pall was cast over the counterculture, a pall which would only grow worse. In 1970, the deaths of four student demonstrators at Kent State University, killed by National Guardsmen, and the deaths of rock musician Jimi Hendrix and rock singer Janis Joplin, killed by drugs, sent shudders through the counterculture. Those deaths confirmed what San Francisco's hippies had foreseen when they proclaimed the death of the hippie in the fall of 1967--the end of the counterculture as a vibrant, original force.⁴²

By the mid-1970s, with the most odious objects of protest gone, the Sixties fizzled out. Desegregation was more or less accomplished. In Dallas, Wes Wise became the first independent mayor, elected without the endorsement of the Citizens Council. Abortion, a byproduct of the sexual revolution, was legal. President Richard Nixon resigned in

⁴²Charles Perry, The Haight-Ashbury: A History (New York: Vintage Books, 1985), 242-244.

disgrace. American troops, once numbering more than 540,000, left Vietnam. Marijuana was a misdemeanor in most places. The music industry and fashion world had cashed in on the Sixties, commercializing the hippies' music and fashion by taking them mainstream. Finally, in 1977 the Iconoclast folded. Dallas and America moved on to other concerns.

Yet remnants of the Sixties remained embedded in the dominant culture that at first had feared the corrosive influence of the counterculture. Many of the things that had shocked American society about the counterculture eventually influenced or were absorbed into society at large. But in the Sixties, it was hippies who were proclaiming, "Make love, not war," and "Tune in, turn on, drop out." A sexual revolution had swept the country, changing sexual attitudes. And the hippies, if not actually in the vanguard, were at least more open than mainstream society about their embrace of those changes. Recreational drug use was another mainstay of the counterculture. Hippies used drugs to expand their minds, to relax, to "groove." All the while, rock 'n' roll blared in the background. The music was a new kind of music that spoke to a new generation. And in Dallas, Stoney Burns and Dallas Notes were spreading the word about what was happening here to a new generation of Dallas youth.

CHAPTER III

NOTES FROM THE UNDERGROUND AND THE HILLTOP:

SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY CONFRONTS THE SIXTIES

Notes from the Underground: The SMU Off-Campus Free Press began its life as a gadfly to Dallas's Southern Methodist University. Notes¹ was a small, lone liberal voice in the small, conservative wilderness of SMU, with its slightly more than 7,000 students. Within months the cheeky upstart, which began as the result of a classroom exchange, moved from shaking up the staid "Hilltop," as SMU was called, to perplexing and provoking Dallas, the nation's eight-largest city. In the process, Notes helped lay the groundwork for the emergence of a Dallas counterculture by giving a voice to fringe elements in Dallas society that were ignored, underreported, or denigrated by Dallas's two daily newspapers; that voice served as a rallying point for the diverse threads that wove together to make up the Dallas counterculture. Some of those threads were the antiwar movement, the civil rights movement, and the movement to

¹The editors referred to Notes from the Underground in abbreviated form as the Underground in the earliest issues; however, they soon started using Notes. By March 1968, the paper dropped from the Underground from its title and became Dallas Notes. Thereafter it was referred to in shortened form as Notes. For the sake of clarity, I refer to the newspaper in shortened form as Notes throughout this thesis.

decriminalize the use of marijuana. In Dallas all were small movements, but when united by what they had in common--opposition to society's rules--they seemed larger and more threatening. By writing sympathetically about movements that challenged society and people who were seen as society's outcasts, Notes played a role in transmitting the ideas of those movements and people to a wider audience. But first, there was SMU.

Conservative SMU, a small, private, Methodist liberal arts school, was an unlikely birthplace for a left-leaning, wave-making newspaper. Although suburban Arlington had the University of Texas at Arlington and forty-five miles to the north was North Texas State University in Denton, Dallas did not then have a four-year public university with the large, diverse student body public universities attract. If it had, it might reasonably have expected such a thing there, but not at SMU. With its gracious, tree-canopied campus of Georgian, red-brick, colonnaded buildings situated in quiet University Park, one of Dallas's two wealthy island cities, SMU looked like a sedate Ivy League college. That was certainly the image it hoped to convey, styling itself as the "Harvard of the South." But despite its pretensions to Ivy League excellence, its reputation was that of a school for rich kids. But a spark ignited inside a classroom in one of SMU's stately buildings that eventually spread from the Hilltop to the larger Dallas metropolitan area.

Photographs of students in the school newspaper in the spring of 1967 show individuals frozen in some indeterminate time. Except for women's hairstyles, SMU students would not have looked out of place on a college campus in the Forties or Fifties--or at a real Ivy League college. For both sexes, the look was a neatly put-together, prep-school look. Men wore short hair, sometimes crew cuts, button-down shirts, slacks or chinos, and loafers or saddle oxfords. Women wore madras plaid skirts and penny loafers. When they dressed up, they wore pearls, not love beads.² The hipper trends of the more fashion-forward coasts, such as miniskirts, longer hair for men, and long, perfectly straight hair for women, had not yet hit the South or SMU in a big way.³ When the men of Kappa Alpha let their whiskers grow for Old South Week, they were mistaken for protestor types.⁴

The buzz on campus that semester centered on two hotly debated issues--the university's master plan, which was intended to build the small liberal arts school into a "great" university, and whether SMU should join the National Students' Association (NSA). The student newspaper, The SMU Campus, which came out three times a week, devoted extensive

²See The SMU Campus, 25 January 1967-3 May 1967.

³Ibid., 2 May 1967.

⁴Ibid., 17 March 1967.

space to these issues.⁵ On the former, the paper editorialized that SMU shouldn't try to copy Harvard, but should strive for its own unique identity.⁶ On the latter, the Campus said the debate could open up SMU to new ideas, a tacit acknowledgment that they hadn't always been welcome there.⁷ NSA was controversial because of its stance on Vietnam and civil rights. In the South, many universities had dropped out of NSA because it supported civil rights. The Young Republicans and Young Americans for Freedom vigorously opposed membership, alleging NSA supported Cuba's communist leader Fidel Castro and draft-dodging. All this, despite recent allegations by Ramparts magazine that, in fact, the Central Intelligence Agency funded and controlled the NSA.⁸ In addition, SMU, with its strong Greek presence, worried that NSA was anti-Greek. There was also fear that membership would hurt SMU's ongoing sustentation drive, although the head of the SMU development office downplayed that concern.⁹ Senator Chuck Cook urged NSA membership to counter the prevalent perception of SMU as "provincial."¹⁰

⁵Ibid., 25 January 1967-3 May 1967.

⁶Ibid., 1 February 1967.

⁷Ibid., 31 January 1967.

⁸Kirkpatrick Sale, SDS (New York: Random House, 1973), 330.

⁹Campus, 24 February 1967.

¹⁰Ibid., 25 January 1967.

Whether SMU could achieve greatness was not settled that semester, but whether to join NSA was, at least temporarily. Amidst fierce argument and a petition drive to force a campuswide referendum on the decision, the Student Senate voted to join NSA for a one-year trial.¹¹

Another hot topic was the role of the university as a forum for ideas. Editorials praised the fact that with both the "great university" and the NSA debates, SMU was achieving more openness to other viewpoints--just like a real "great" university.¹² The Campus, student body president Lindsey Enderby,¹³ and Dean of Student Life Fred W. Bryson in a speech to the Mortar Board organization¹⁴ all called that healthy. The underlying implication was that such openness to different ideas had not always been the case. Critics of greater openness feared it was tantamount to "indoctrination."¹⁵ The Campus came to the defense of SMU and academic freedom:

Just because SMU allows its students to read Marx does not mean SMU has instituted Communist indoctrination on campus. Because SMU allows Martin Luther King¹⁶ to speak on campus does not

¹¹Ibid., 25 January 1967-3 May 1967.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid., 3 February 1967

¹⁴Ibid., 8 March 1967.

¹⁵Ibid., 25 January 1967 to 3 May 1967. .

¹⁶Civil rights leader the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., spoke at SMU on "The Future of Integration" on 17 March 1966.

mean the next step is demonstrations, sit-ins, lay-ins, and a barrage of beatniks of all types.¹⁷

Criticizing the Campus was a popular pastime. A letter to the editor called the paper The SMU Catastrophe.¹⁸ Associate editor Judy Bell defended the Campus at the Soapbox, the campus free-speech area, saying the paper was not perfect, but newspapers were not supposed to make news. "We print what's happening," Bell said. "If there's no news, it's because the students aren't doing anything."¹⁹ But all that was about to change. Criticism of the Campus was about to take a quantum leap, and a newspaper was about to make news.

Dr. Robert Jung taught his popular existential philosophy class again that semester. Complaints about the inadequacies of the school paper spilled over into his classroom and among an informal social group that included Jung, his wife, and some of his students. Tired of hearing his students complain, Jung challenged them to start their own newspaper. Underground newspapers were springing up all over that year, aided by the innovation of offset printing, which let such newspapers be printed inexpensively. Someone in the group supplied what he thought would be a perfect name for such a newspaper, Notes from the Underground, after

¹⁷Campus, 21 February 1967.

¹⁸Ibid., 31 January 1967.

¹⁹Ibid., 3 March 1967.

Fyodor Dostoyevsky's novella of the same name, the title hinting vaguely at subversion.²⁰

Among Jung's students were Doug D. Baker, Jr., a twenty-two-year-old history and government student and debate-team member; twenty-one-year-old Roy Barte Haile, Jr., who had not declared a major but was leaning toward English or philosophy; and Baker's fellow Young Democrat, outspoken campus figure J.D. Arnold, who was twenty-two and a history and philosophy major. Jung's challenge proved to be just the impetus they needed. Baker and Haile, joined by another SMU student and Young Democrat, Nancy Lynne Brown, who was dating Baker, rose to meet Jung's challenge; the triumvirate founded Notes from the Underground: The SMU Off-Campus Free Press, which they presented as an alternative to the Campus, the newspaper produced by SMU journalism students.²¹ A few other students, who came and went from edition to edition, contributed stories.²²

Arnold, who had been an editor on the campus newspaper,

²⁰J.D. Arnold, telephone interview, 20 April 1999, cited hereinafter as Arnold interview 2; Doug D. Baker, Jr., interview by author, Alameda, California, 29 October 1998, cited hereinafter as Baker interview 1; Doug D. Baker, Jr., telephone interview by author, 15 March 1999, cited hereinafter as Baker interview 2; and Roy Barte Haile, Jr., telephone interview by author, 10 May 1999, cited hereinafter as Haile interview.

²¹J.D. Arnold, telephone interview by author, 12 April 1999, cited hereinafter as Arnold interview 1; Arnold interview 2; Baker interview 1; and Haile interview.

²²Notes, 17 March 1967-10 May 1967.

declined to be involved with the first issue, because he was temporarily "boycotting radical activities."²³ For the second issue, he joined the three ringleaders as a writer-- he may have figured he might as well, since he was getting credit, or blame, anyway. When the first issue came out anonymously, Arnold was on the administration's short list of suspects. He was a likely suspect since he had a higher profile on campus than the others. Arnold was a KSMU radio personality, a letter-to-the-editor writer, and a frequent Soapbox speaker. At KSMU, Arnold was notorious for such pranks as broadcasting live from the scene of an alleged panty raid taking place at the women's quad. Eager panty raiders rushed to join the raid, which had not existed until Arnold began his play-by-play account. With his unruly, longish hair, beard, and cigarette dangling from his mouth, Arnold stood out on a conformist campus--he looked like a rebel, or maybe even a beatnik. He had actually marched at Selma, Alabama. For Arnold, who had grown up in a well-to-do township outside Chicago and had lived in Switzerland, SMU was "very, very different from what I was supposed to do. . . . I wanted to wear blue jeans, not tweed, and drink beer, not Scotch. Texas was non-Establishment."²⁴ Arnold wrote for the paper over the next two semesters, but his

²³Arnold interview 2.

²⁴Arnold interview 1.

main involvement as an editor would come later.²⁵

For Baker, the paper, although he had no way of knowing it at the time, would define his life for most of the next ten years. Baker in many ways fit the profile of the typical SMU student--a white, middle-class Protestant from a conservative, Middle American background, the son of Midwestern Republicans. He was born 29 September 1944. Baker, along with his mother and three younger brothers, crisscrossed the United States following his father to the heavy-construction projects he managed--among them the missile bases, atomic energy plants, and interstate highways that were part of the American defense infrastructure. The family never stayed long in any one place.²⁶

When Baker was a freshman at DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana, his parents and three younger brothers moved to Dallas where his father had accepted a job working for Clint W. Murchison, Jr., at Tecon Construction Co. Tecon was among the many concerns of one of Dallas's bigger-than-life oil dynasties, the Murchison family. The Bakers bought a low-slung, modern brick home on Lindenshire, in a solid middle-class area of what was then the far reaches of North Dallas, just a stone's throw from Murchison's limestone mansion on twenty-five wooded acres fronting

²⁵Ibid.; Arnold interview 2; Baker interview 1; and Haile interview.

²⁶Baker interviews 1-2.

Forest Lane.²⁷ Baker's mother suffered from painful back problems. With her husband frequently on the road managing Tecon's projects, she wanted her oldest son at home, so at the end of his freshman year, Baker dutifully followed his family South and enrolled at SMU in the summer of 1964.²⁸

Baker was an anomaly at SMU in other ways. On a campus known for its active fraternity-sorority system, he had no interest in joining a fraternity, despite being a Phi Delta Theta legacy through his father and uncles. He also had opted out of playing college football, although he had played football in high school in Rock Springs, Wyoming. Baker was a serious, philosophical young man, deeply concerned with the political and moral issues of the day, and he was gradually undergoing some profound changes in his world view. Things he experienced or observed during his freshman year caused him to question his beliefs. In his politics, as well as his religious beliefs, he was moving from conservatism to liberalism.²⁹

As a teen-ager, Baker had read economic theory far advanced for his age; he had even been moved to write off for literature from the Hudson Institute, a conservative think tank. He had been a Young Republican, who idolized

²⁷Jane Wolfe, The Murchisons: The Rise and Fall of a Texas Dynasty (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), 4-5, 282-284, 287-288.

²⁸Baker interviews 1-2.

²⁹Baker interview 1.

Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater, the Republican who resoundingly lost the 1964 presidential election for being "too far right." By 1964, Baker had moved his support to the liberal wing of the Young Republicans, joining his chapter in supporting New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller. At a regional Young Republicans convention in Chicago, Illinois, in early 1964, Baker became uneasy at the way the Young Republicans in charge controlled things. "It was like somebody had really studied how to organize crowd control a la the Nazi Youth rallies. . . .The people that were in control wouldn't let anybody have any say except for their own people. It was like, 'We have the power--screw you,' and it was not a democratic example at all." What he saw in Chicago disturbed him, and Baker moved further to the left.³⁰

After he reached SMU, Baker aligned himself with the Young Democrats, an active group that included such future Texas Democratic luminaries as future Attorney General Jim Mattox, then an SMU law student, and future Governor Ann Richards, who, with her then husband Dave Richards, threw parties for the group.³¹

Baker had moved from teaching Sunday School in the formal Episcopal Church to teaching Sunday School in the laid-back Unitarian Church. In contrast to the large,

³⁰Ibid.; and Baker interview 2.

³¹Baker interviews 1-2.

impersonal Episcopalian congregation his family attended in Far North Dallas, Baker felt at home in the small, informal First Unitarian Church, which was a gathering place for many of Dallas's liberals and activists. Baker felt more of a "connection" to the Unitarian Church, a connection both cerebral and spiritual.³²

Baker was a young man who strived to put his ideals into action. At DePauw, he had worked side-by-side waiting tables in the freshman women's dorm with African-American male students from the Deep South. His co-workers were nice guys, but they could not, for instance, go inside a barber shop in town for a haircut. When they joined other blacks in picketing, Baker marched alongside them. It was the right thing to do, he believed. In Dallas he tutored at a black parochial school in South Dallas and was dismayed by the unsympathetic attitude of the nuns toward their charges.³³

Baker also began participating in the Dallas Committee for a Peaceful Solution in Vietnam's vigils against the war in Vietnam, which began in December 1966. At noon each Saturday, a small group stood in Dealey Plaza in the shadow of President John F. Kennedy's assassination site and for an hour bore silent witness to its opposition to the country's growing involvement in the undeclared war in Vietnam. All

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid.

the while, American Nazi Party members conducted noisy counter-demonstrations with racist and anti-Semitic rhetoric, which were offset by Jewish counter-demonstrations.³⁴ Holding an unpopular opinion in Dallas was not easy; standing up publicly for it was less so, but Baker thought it was important to do what he could as an individual to change the world for the better. That spring he and Haile organized an antiwar demonstration, attempting to do something concrete about their concerns about the war.³⁵

Given Baker's serious nature, it was perhaps surprising that he initially saw Notes strictly as a caper, rather than as an agent for change. "I don't think we were trying to change anything. I think we were meeting the challenge from Bob Jung, but, also, it was a fun thing, and it was a lark," Baker said.³⁶ Producing the paper continued to be a challenge. With every obstacle imposed by SMU, "We thought, 'They've raised the bar--let's see if we can jump over it,'" Baker said.³⁷ Seeing Notes as a serious, important commitment would come later for Baker--with his penchant for joining action with ideals, it was probably inevitable. For Haile, who would go on to be a national organizer for

³⁴Campus, 26 April 1967; and Notes, 1 May 1967.

³⁵Baker interview 1; and Haile interview.

³⁶Baker interview 1.

³⁷Baker interview 2.

Students for a Democratic Society, the paper was "a small step" toward a different kind of serious, important commitment.³⁸

Haile came from a background remarkably similar to Baker's, but with a Texas flavor. He was born 14 September 1945 in Dallas. His father worked mostly for Pitney-Bowes, and he and his parents, brother and two sisters were "corporate gypsies" moving all over Texas, and to Atlanta, Georgia, for two years. Along the way, Haile attended thirteen schools in twelve years. His Methodist parents, along with most Texans, voted Republican for the first time in 1952, and never looked back. Haile was a Young Republican. In high school, Haile was a jock, mainly to attract girls, but he did not play in college because he was "not that good," and football had ruined his knees.³⁹

Haile graduated from Richardson High School in 1964 and spent a semester at Texas Tech, which he hated. He dropped out and went to California where he worked in a fiberglass factory, intending to earn money and return to college after a year. Naively, he wrote his draft board, told them his plans, and asked if that was all right. They assured him it was. Before his year off was over, however, Haile received a draft notice, which was delivered to the big house his family rented on the corner of Hillcrest and Normandy

³⁸Ibid.; and Haile interview.

³⁹Haile interview.

avenues facing the SMU campus. Haile immediately came home and enrolled in SMU, reactivating his student deferment. He had always assumed he would attend SMU one day, since his father had been a student there in the football team's Doak Walker-Kyle Rote glory days.⁴⁰

Haile had paid absolutely no attention to the Gulf of Tonkin incident in August 1964. Like most Americans, he barely knew where Indochina was, but the close call with the draft got his undivided attention. He began reading everything he could get his hands on about Vietnam, and what he read began his radicalization.⁴¹ Baker, Haile, and the others in the group had intense discussions about the war; the Port Huron statement, SDS's 1962 mission statement that was just being passed around; and why women had to live in dorms when men could live off-campus. Why did the Campus never write about the things they discussed?⁴²

The basic idea behind Notes was that there was a lot more going on than students would ever know from reading the Campus.⁴³ Haile saw the school paper as "the official organ of the Greeks."⁴⁴ Arnold said, "The SMU Campus had a whole section devoted to who was getting pinned or

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid.; Arnold interview 1.

⁴³Notes, 17 March 1967.

⁴⁴Haile interview.

lavaliered to one another in the fraternity-sorority system. It was quite irrelevant. SMU had some great speakers, but the coverage lacked a deeper comprehension of the issues. We were not deprived as students of a widespread variety of thoughts--it was the reporting on it that was inadequate. [The Campus writers] didn't know what they were talking about."⁴⁵

Computer giant Texas Instruments, one of whose co-founders was Dallas Mayor J. Erik Jonsson, unwittingly made the first issue possible. As a Xerox boy for the defense contractor at the TI plant on Lemmon Avenue, Haile had a secret government clearance. His job running the reproduction department fit around his school hours and did not require him to punch a time clock. Therefore, he did not raise any suspicions when he appeared at work Thursday, 16 March 1967, with a briefcase and proceeded to run off five hundred copies of each of five pages, stapled them together, and left carrying five hundred copies of the first issue of Notes in his briefcase. TI provided all the materiel--copy paper, a Xerox machine, staples, and staplers. The only expense incurred in producing the first issue was the cost of gasoline to drive the short distance down Mockingbird Lane from SMU to TI's plant. "The whole thing was a TI operation in terms of substance," Baker said,

⁴⁵Arnold interview 2.

recalling the commando raid.⁴⁶

Friday, 17 March 1967, was the last day of classes before spring break. Baker and Haile, after staying up all night, arrived on campus early in the morning and began passing out copies of the first issue of Notes to students, faculty, staff, and administrators as they arrived at school. They left piles of Notes in the wooden boxes around campus where people were accustomed to grabbing their free copies of the Campus, piling their papers atop and beside the campus newspapers. They also left small stacks of the paper on tables in the Student Center. The new paper was met with "a sense of wonder and amazement and surprise," according to Baker.⁴⁷ Haile called the response "absolutely phenomenal."⁴⁸ Initial response was so great that the editors ran off a thousand copies of the second issue.⁴⁹ Everyone wanted to read the startling new paper. The paper was off to a better-than-imagined start.⁵⁰

Once people had read it, they were not sure what to think. A letter to Notes said campus reactions fell into two categories: "This had to be the doing of some radical group trying to gain a foothold on our sterling campus," or

⁴⁶Baker interviews 1-2; and Haile interview.

⁴⁷Baker interview 1.

⁴⁸Haile interview.

⁴⁹Baker interview 1; and Dallas Observer, 8 December 1988.

⁵⁰Baker interview 1; and Haile interview.

"spring fever" has hit "a group of fun-loving gripers."⁵¹ Haile believed the reaction from SMU was mild. The trio had not used their names for fear of what might happen, but it did not seem like much did at first. In addition, Haile was surprised by supportive comments from people he considered unlikely supporters--students he considered to be social, rich kids. "The draft was cranking up so quickly, and the same thing happened to these clean-cut rich kids," Haile said, referring to his close call with the draft.⁵²

Dallas Morning News columnist Kent Biffle blamed spring. No names appeared on the first issue, which prompted Biffle to write that Notes "lashed out boldly and anonymously at the administration, banality and things like that."⁵³ Notes gleefully reprinted Biffle's sally--the upstart publication had been had been noticed.⁵⁴

Notes looked innocuous enough, certainly not like the forerunner of a newspaper that would have the long run and the impact it had. It looked like what it was, an amateur operation put out on a frayed shoestring. The first issue, which consisted of five 8 1/2-by-12 photocopied and stapled pages, looked more like a handout a student might get in

⁵¹Notes, 6 April 1967.

⁵²Haile interview.

⁵³Dallas Morning News, 21 March 1967.

⁵⁴Notes, 29 March, 1967.

class than a publication with vaguely radical aspirations.⁵⁵

But appearances were deceiving. The little sheet had a sting. The lead story of the first issue served as Notes's statement of purpose. It identified the problem--The SMU Campus, the officially sanctioned campus newspaper, was a do-nothing "anachronism"--and it offered a solution, or at least an alternative--Notes. The Campus, Notes asserted, was a public-relations tool aimed at alumni, not students, and was mediocre at that. Notes further charged that the campus newspaper ignored campus issues. Notes announced its intention "to do something really daring -- to tell the truth about what we witness on campus." The paper promised a free press beholden to no special interests, unlike the Campus, which Notes said was under the thumb of the journalism department. "We're not afraid to put in writing the very same ideas we discuss among ourselves."⁵⁶ It did not take long for SMU to learn what Notes staffers had been discussing among themselves--such provocative questions as whether military recruiters should be allowed on campus, what was wrong with SMU and what to do about it, and could a person really get high from smoking banana peels?⁵⁷

Perhaps potentially more dangerous than challenging the

⁵⁵Ibid., 17 March 1967.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid., 17 March 1967-10 May 1967.

quality of the Campus was a piece challenging the prevalent view of patriotism, an unquestioning allegiance to the United States no matter what the United States did. It was one thing to say the campus newspaper was not very good, but it was another to question what many Americans felt should go unquestioned.⁵⁸

And then there was a story with a headline posing the question, "Kool or Kook?" The article was a defense of novelist Ken Kesey's baffling appearance at SMU's Academic Conference.⁵⁹ The event was already old news, and the Campus had covered it,⁶⁰ but it was still being discussed because of the sensation it caused. It left much of the audience bewildered; others were "profoundly impressed and could talk of nothing else for days."⁶¹ Kesey's presentation was entitled "Psychedelic Psalms," which should have made alarm bells go off. Before the speech, Senator Chuck Cook, chairman of the committee that invited Kesey, said, "It's anybody's idea what he's going to talk about."⁶² Certainly most of the students who attended expected him to talk about something; they did not expect a weird "happening" that included breathing exercises, dimmed

⁵⁸Ibid., 17 March 1967.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Campus, 3 March 1967; 8 March 1967.

⁶¹Notes, 17 March 1967.

⁶²Campus, 3 March 1967.

lights, a Kesey cohort crawling around growling, and audience members forming a circle and pretending they were seeds and exploding atoms.⁶³ Much of the audience was mystified and demanded to know whether Kesey was putting them on or making fun of them. To those students, Kesey was definitely a kook. Student Martha Pitchford complained, "The whole thing was completely disorganized and confusing."⁶⁴

If the world at large knew about Kesey at all, it was as the critically acclaimed author of One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest and Sometimes a Great Notion; however, to the hip world, Kesey was an underground hero, an early user and popularizer of the hallucinogenic drug, LSD, or lysergic acid diethylamide, who had "turned on"⁶⁵ much of San Francisco's hip crowd with his so-called "acid tests," acid being the slang term for LSD then in vogue. With the ascent up the best-seller charts of Tom Wolfe's The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test, Kesey's exploits became more widely known, but that was still more than a year away.⁶⁶ Wolfe attributed the spread of the psychedelic phenomenon to Kesey. "Very few realized that it had all emanated from one

⁶³Ibid., 8 March 1967.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵"Turned on" is a slang term for "introduced to," originally used about psychedelic drugs.

⁶⁶See Tom Wolfe, The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test. (New York: Bantam Books, 1969)

electric source," and that source was Kesey and his followers, the Merry Pranksters, Wolfe wrote.⁶⁷ The Student Academic Committee certainly did not realize it. After the furor surrounding Kesey's appearance, Cook, the committee chairman, explained all they knew was that Kesey had been recommended by several professors as a modern American writer. "News of his activities as the leader of the West Coast's social rebellion came as sort of a shock to us."⁶⁸

Notes criticized the lack of imagination and intellectual daring of SMU students attending the Academic Conference, some of whom were "resentful and fearful." The story contained an implied criticism of the American educational system, which conditioned students to expect spoon-fed information. "They wanted a clear, concise lecture, uncomplicated and to the point. But he refused to accommodate them. He forced them to dig out the meaning for themselves."⁶⁹ Notes came down on the side of "cool." If the audience thought he was a kook, the audience just didn't "get it."⁷⁰ Notes was hip to Ken Kesey and all he stood for. Unlike the majority of the audience, Notes got it.⁷¹

⁶⁷Ibid., 254.

⁶⁸Campus, 31 March 1967.

⁶⁹Notes, 17 March 1967.

⁷⁰"Get it" is a colloquial expression for "to understand."

⁷¹Notes, 17 March 1967.

A poem addressed Kesey as "Oh God" and asked him to come back to clarify himself and flout his disciples. There was no mention of drugs, but if Ken Kesey had disciples in Dallas, it most likely meant one thing--people were dropping acid in Dallas, Texas, or, if they hadn't, they wanted to. Although by 1967, Kesey had moved "beyond" the use of acid,⁷² his acolytes in Dallas had not yet had the opportunity to reach that point in their quests for enlightenment, because, like fashion trends, drug trends were slow to get to Dallas.

In fact, the editors of Notes had only read about Kesey and drugs. "Ken Kesey and his people were on the fringe for us. . . . We weren't sitting around dropping acid," Arnold said. "Liquor was our drug of choice. We philosophized about it, but it hadn't moved down to Dallas yet."⁷³ Haile had the attitude of many radical political activists toward hallucinogens--he scorned them and the whole non-serious countercultural attitude they represented.⁷⁴

There was more for SMU to swallow. If it was not bad enough that vaguely subversive ideas were being proffered and that the Campus was ineffectual, it was worse than all that--SMU is not a great university. Notes offered a

⁷²Stephen L. Tanner, Ken Kesey, Twayne's United States Authors Series (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1983), 99; and Tom Wolfe, Acid Test, 7, 324

⁷³Arnold interview 2.

⁷⁴Haile interview.

solution for that, too--join the University of Texas system, with its vast resources. The first issue closed with more pounding of the Campus. The campus newspaper was bad, according to Notes, but the editors allowed that it was not the fault of the journalism students who produced it--"The system is to blame."⁷⁵

The Campus was, in fact, an award-winning college newspaper, having won third-place honors for overall excellence among college newspapers of its size at the Southwestern Journalism Conference that very semester.⁷⁶ It was professional in appearance, and its stories, columns, and editorials were generally well written and edited, although there were the to-be-expected typos and errors of a student publication. The Campus's news and advertising reflected its readers. The Campus had much fraternity, sorority, and sports news, the big sports story being the SMU Mustangs capturing the Southwestern Conference basketball championship.⁷⁷ There were stories about campus speakers; faculty honors and appointments; campus organizations; new courses; the Rotunda yearbook beauty-queen nominees; registration problems; theater productions; the Tyler [Texas] Rose Queen, who was an SMU co-ed; parking and traffic around campus; and the honorary doctorate

⁷⁵Notes, 17 March 1967.

⁷⁶Campus, 15 March 1967.

⁷⁷Ibid, 7 March 1967.

presented to entertainer Bob Hope, who had given SMU the money to build the Bob Hope Theatre, then under construction. The paper carried a healthy amount of display advertising from area businesses catering to the college crowd.⁷⁸

The Campus did not shy from writing about controversial issues, criticism of SMU, campus speakers who opposed the status quo, nor was it oblivious to social problems outside the privileged, insular world its students inhabited.⁷⁹ The newspaper printed letters to the editor critical of the school and the Campus, and it regularly reported on speakers at the Soapbox, where students spoke out about subjects of concern. Among the letter writers and stump speakers was Arnold, who could always be counted on for an audacious opinion, which the Campus printed. "Who gives a horse's _____⁸⁰ about the administration?" Arnold asked at the Soapbox one day.⁸¹ The Campus reported about a group of theology students who went to impoverished Starr County, Texas, in the Rio Grande Valley to investigate the farm workers' strike;⁸² students from the Campus YMCA who

⁷⁸Ibid., 25 January 1967-3 May 1967.

⁷⁹Ibid.

⁸⁰Expletive was deleted in Campus.

⁸¹Campus, 31 March 1967.

⁸²Ibid., 10 February 1967; 15 February 1967.

tutored African-American students in South Dallas;⁸³ and a Religious Emphasis Week panel discussing conditions in dirt-poor West Dallas that made race riots possible.⁸⁴

Despite the university's conservatism and the conservatism of much of its student body, many campus speakers that semester were in tune with some of the undercurrents of the time, and the Campus reported their views, relying on the modern journalistic credo of objectivity. Speakers that semester talked about the civil rights movement, sexuality among college students, Black Power, the New Left, and the Free Speech Movement at the University of California at Berkeley, all from sympathetic perspectives.⁸⁵ The Campus followed up Dr. John Searle's Academic Conference speech, "Academic Freedom, Student Rights, and the Politics of Student Confrontation,"⁸⁶ with an in-depth look at the Free Speech Movement.⁸⁷

After the January speech of Dr. Howard Zinn, a Boston University history professor who had been involved in the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, which was active in the civil rights movement, an unidentified professor confronted Zinn after the speech and wished failure to SNCC

⁸³Ibid., 15 February 1967.

⁸⁴Ibid., 22 February 1967.

⁸⁵Ibid., 25 January 1967-3 May 1967.

⁸⁶Ibid., 3 March 1967; 8 March 1967.

⁸⁷Ibid., 14 March 1967.

and death for Zinn.⁸⁸ Although a Campus editorial condemned Zinn's attacker, noting that others who disagreed with Zinn did so peaceably in the question-and-answer session, the protestor was an example of the intense reaction that unpopular views aroused in Dallas. The Campus said such behavior would only continue the post-assassination condemnation heaped on Dallas.⁸⁹

The Campus did not ignore Vietnam, and its story selection strived for balance. The paper reprinted wire service stories that propagated government news about the war and the Viet Cong, but it also ran an analytical series about the war and wrote about students and speakers who questioned the war. When Norman Mailer was to speak at SMU, the story in the Campus duly noted that as well as being one of America's best writers, Mailer was also one of the country's leading critics of the Vietnam War.⁹⁰ The Campus wrote about college draft deferments and changes in the draft laws, but it also printed a story about how to go to Canada to evade the draft. The presence of the Perkins School of Theology, where Methodist ministers received their religious educations, made for a token antiwar presence on campus, because ministers, driven by their religious convictions, were among the first to speak out against the

⁸⁸Ibid., 31 January 1967.

⁸⁹Ibid.

⁹⁰Ibid., 15 March 1967.

war.⁹¹

Besides covering speakers who were controversial on the left of the political spectrum, the Campus covered the Dallas speech of ultra-conservative John Birch Society founder Robert Welch, a speech about Vietnam that was advertised in the Campus.⁹²

Speakers like Mrs. Ogden Bane, the dean of women, underscored the essential conservatism of SMU. She discussed whether women should use college to prepare for marriage or a career. Bane said women should use college to develop their "intellectual identity" and that after college, if a woman wanted a career, she should have one.⁹³

The entertainers who came to campus or who advertised their concerts in the school paper demonstrated SMU's social conservatism. They were the same performers the students' parents listened to--Ferrante and Teicher, Peter Nero, Jimmy Dean.⁹⁴ Although folk singers Peter, Paul, and Mary, who were committed civil rights and antiwar activists, advertised their concert in the Campus, the beauty of their harmonies took the edge off the lyrics they sang. Theirs was safe protest music. When popular ballad singer Johnny Mathis came to Dallas for a concert, the Campus asked him

⁹¹Ibid., 25 January 1967-3 May 1967.

⁹²Ibid., 10 March 1967.

⁹³Ibid., 8 February 1967.

⁹⁴Ibid., 25 January 1967-3 May 1967.

about Bob Dylan. Mathis dismissed him. "Dylan isn't that earth-shattering although he is a great talent."⁹⁵ His opinion was likely one many SMU students shared, and it was just one reason SMU needed Notes. There was a whole world of new music that was defining the mood of part of a generation and neither the Campus nor popular singers like Johnny Mathis "got it." Although Notes did not write about rock music in its first two months of existence, it would.

The school newspaper's lone acknowledgement of the emergent drug culture was that it was popular to have "psychedelic" dances, with the strobe lights and "light shows" that Kesey's acid tests popularized. There was even a psychedelic dance held on campus.⁹⁶ But this was psychedelia as a fad, not as new way of living.

Conservative students may have comprised much of the student body, but the students active in student government and the student journalists were aware of what was going on in the wider world. The Campus, in fact, covered most of the same stories Notes did. The difference--or the problem, as Notes editors saw it--was largely one of point-of-view and emphasis. The Campus handled stories objectively. Notes did not. How could it be objective about a war that it believed was wrong? "Hot Damn--Vietnam," the headline of a Notes story about a roundtable discussion about Vietnam,

⁹⁵Ibid., 14 February 1967.

⁹⁶Ibid., 3 March 1967.

expressed popular American sentiment about the war; Notes readers would perceive the irony in that headline.⁹⁷ It was also partly the case that the editors of Notes did not think the Campus was very good because it carried so much about things they were not interested in--fraternities, sororities, the social scene--stories that interested most people on campus. The Notes editors did not, however, represent the views of most people on campus. Years later Baker admitted, "They were actually doing a better job than we [were]. We needed them because there were things that they couldn't do, and they didn't like it." He compared Notes to being like a kid with no parents--nobody could tell them what to do. The Campus, he believed, was jealous of that freedom.⁹⁸

The definition of freedom was another place the on- and off-campus papers diverged. Both newspapers shared a mandate to tell the truth; what was the truth was a matter of interpretation. The school paper's motto was Veritas Liberabit Vos, or "The truth shall make you free," a thought repeated on the masthead with the words of SMU's founding president Umphrey Lee: "Freedom of the press is not the freedom to say what you please, but the freedom to tell people the truth about the world we live in." Notes editors agreed wholeheartedly with the second part of that

⁹⁷Notes, 14 April 1967.

⁹⁸Baker interview 1.

statement; it was the first part with which they differed-- if a newspaper did not have the freedom to say what it pleased, it did not have freedom of the press. Notes claimed that freedom for itself. Arnold said, "A lot of [what] we were talking about was just freedom--against censorship. . . .and we were absolutists about it. There should be absolute freedom to say anything."⁹⁹ To maintain that freedom, the newspaper and its editors would put up a struggle over the years of its existence.

The second issue of Notes, dated 29 March 1967, had grown to eight photocopied pages. By then, SMU authorities had made it known that if there was going to be an underground newspaper at SMU, they were going to know who was responsible. Because of that, Baker publicly identified himself as the editor, although he might have done so anyway in response to needling by Biffle and campus critics. Of the five contributors to the second issue, three were named, including Arnold, but co-editors Haile and Brown remained anonymous. Based on demand for the first issue, the editors printed 1,000 copies of the second one.¹⁰⁰ The second issue restated in slightly different terms the paper's raisons d'etre: "to provide a positive charge for SMU" and "to experiment [and] to provide a forum" for constructive

⁹⁹Arnold interview 1.

¹⁰⁰Dallas Observer, 8 December 1988; and Baker interviews 1-2.

questions about SMU.¹⁰¹ SMU's dean of student life, Fred W. Bryson, congratulated Notes and wished it a long life, although there was perhaps a gentle barb in his salutation, "My dear unknown friends."¹⁰² Bryson would undoubtedly come to regret his wish for the paper's longevity.

The Campus gave Notes a mixed review. On the negative side, the Campus faulted sloppy research, bad timing, not enough copies to go around, and its anonymity, which by then had been partly rectified. On the plus side, the Campus acknowledged that Notes gave a new point of view to those who had become unwilling to accept news from official sources. The Campus warned that with freedom came responsibility; only time would tell if Notes would realize its potential. The Campus editorial acknowledged that SMU actually had something usually only found at real "great" universities "where controversy is not a once-a-year occurrence."¹⁰³

Early themes emerged in the first nine issues of Notes, which were distributed free on the SMU campus during the rest of the spring semester of 1967. Among the things the paper was reporting were issues important to the youthful counterculture. The paper's stance was politically leftist, anti-Vietnam War, and in favor of experimentation with

¹⁰¹Notes, 29 March 1967.

¹⁰²Ibid.

¹⁰³Campus, 31 March 1967.

"soft" drugs. Notes provided a forum for the exchange of and also disseminated the political and cultural ideas associated with the counterculture, ideas that were at the very least questioning of the Establishment, at the most critical of it, and ideas that many SMU students were unlikely to come into contact with.

Notes, as did the Campus, wrote about the new SMU chapter of Students for a Democratic Society, the New Left organization with which Baker, and Arnold were affiliated, Baker as an officer, and for whom Haile would become a national organizer. Unlike the Campus, however, Notes's stories presented the pro-SDS stance of its editors. "Barnett" opined that SMU needed SDS because "there is no organization which consistantly [sic] promotes the liberal point of view on campus."¹⁰⁴ When "John Ninebears" visited the large, active University of Texas at Austin SDS chapter, he was inspired to join:

Just like that I could sense committment [sic] indignation, revolution, subversion: Unamericaness [sic] in these people. . . . Besides they're unkempt as well as vocally and openly opposed to the actions of the United States of America in its foreign affairs.¹⁰⁵

Notes's orientation was New Left and activist. Notes scorned the apathy and negativity of SMU's so-called "rebels" who sat around the Student Center dreaming of the

¹⁰⁴Notes, 6 April 1967.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., 5 May 1967.

day when "the KA house will be burned to its foundations, Coors¹⁰⁶ will be put on tap in the Student Center, and every professor who takes roll in his class will be ceremonially lynched."¹⁰⁷ The message of Notes to campus liberals was the same one its editors had gotten from Jung: Do something. Get involved. Put your money where your mouth is. It was an apt message from students who, in founding Notes, had done just that.

Like the Campus, Notes wrote about Vietnam. Unlike the Campus, Notes's stories had an attitude. Notes was opposed to the war, and it encouraged people who believed likewise to stand up for their beliefs. The Campus wrote that Oregon Senator Wayne Morris would speak to the Young Democrats; Baker, Brown, and Arnold were Young Democrats, and Notes urged its readers to attend because Morris was opposed to the war in Vietnam.¹⁰⁸ When Notes reproduced a safe-conduct pass, which was designed to allow its bearer safe passage through U.S. lines, it caused a stir.¹⁰⁹ Baker remembered most people saw the war as a "good adventure" and were offended because they felt that Notes was not

¹⁰⁶In later years, Coors beer became anathema to those with liberal political proclivities after the revelation that Joseph Coors, company president, contributed large sums of money to right-wing causes; however, in 1967 Coors had not yet become politically incorrect.

¹⁰⁷Notes, 6 April 1967.

¹⁰⁸Ibid.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., 4 May 1967.

supporting the American effort in Vietnam.¹¹⁰ The same issue reprinted an impassioned letter to the director of the Episcopalian Peace Fellowship from a U.S. Agency for International Development worker in South Vietnam. He wrote, "If I were a poor Vietnamese peasant in this day, only death would prevent me from being a Vietnamese Communist."¹¹¹

Notes, like the Campus, paid some attention to Dallas news. Again, however, its opinions resonated in its stories. It advocated investigating charges of brutality brought by an African-American teen-age girl against the Dallas police, and it asked why Dallas was surprised when only about 10 percent of voters turned out in the 4 April 1967 Dallas city election. According to Notes, the election was all sewed up by the Citizens Charter Association candidate, so it was understandable why people did not bother to vote.¹¹²

Another place where Notes and the Campus differed in a big way was reporting the counterculture. The Campus did not, except as a fad, like "psychedelic" dances; the counterculture was not something that affected most SMU students. As Baker remembered, SMU was a school where

¹¹⁰Baker interview 1.

¹¹¹David Nesmith, letter, 23 January 1967, reprinted in Notes, 4 May 1967.

¹¹²Notes, 14 April 1967.

"doing things that weren't conventional was really unthinkable."¹¹³ Notes ran a notice for a "be-in" at Davy Crockett National Forest,¹¹⁴ which conveyed Notes's ties to the counterculture. "For those who do not know what a BE-IN is, it is not rationally explainable, so come and learn by example. Bring a gentle, peaceloving mind."¹¹⁵ If readers had not perceived what was behind the paper's celebration of Kesey, the paper reprinted a story from Science journal about the possibility LSD produced genetic defects in users' offspring under the tongue-in-cheek headline "Acidheads Beware!!!" What hip readers would discern was that the only thing LSD users had to beware was the validity of "official" information.¹¹⁶

Staff members conducted their own experiments with smoking burned-to-a-char banana peel to see if rumors that it would cause a mild "high" sensation were true. They concluded it was. "Anyway, it's cheaper than booze and possession of bananas is legal in Texas," Notes said. Notes provided step-by-step instructions, so that interested readers could try the experiment for themselves.¹¹⁷ Legal or not, police apprehended two Texans for smoking bananas,

¹¹³Baker interview 1.

¹¹⁴Notes, 6 April 1967.

¹¹⁵Ibid.

¹¹⁶Ibid., 29 March 1967.

¹¹⁷Ibid.

and in Dallas, Texas, no less. The third issue carried an article by Jeff Shero reprinted from the Austin, Texas, underground paper, The Rag, about the first two Texans to meet this dubious fate. Dallas police "doubly resolved to curb the newest menace originating from the underground."¹¹⁸ The article caught the eye of Norman Mailer, who saw the second issue of the paper when he was speaking on campus. He suggested they submit it to Village Voice, with which he was still nominally affiliated.¹¹⁹

It was perhaps a letter to Notes, rather than a story, that best expressed the ethos of the counterculture, provided evidence of the entwining of the political and cultural threads of the counterculture, and pronounced the ideas likely to show up on Notes's pages. At the behest of Notes's editors, "Randy," a Stanford University graduate school dropout passing through Dallas, wrote a rambling, philosophizing letter about things they had "rapped" about. His letter perfectly detailed two counterculture trains of thought, the political and the cultural. Randy speculated that men feared what they do not understand and hated and were willing to kill what they feared, and he wrote that LSD was one avenue to the truth. "Give yourself the acid test," he advised, listen to Simon and Garfunkel, the Rolling Stones, the Beatles, and the Jefferson Airplane, and "Read

¹¹⁸Ibid., 6 April 1967.

¹¹⁹Ibid., 4 May 1967.

the Autobiography of Malcolm X.¹²⁰ It was all becoming mixed up--political rebellion and cultural rebellion, and both rebellions received attention in the pages of Notes, which, like most underground papers, was journalism by enthusiasm. Whatever a writer, editor, or contributor had an enthusiasm for and there was space for appeared on the pages of Notes.¹²¹

In the third issue, which consisted of ten pages, Brown and Haile unveiled themselves as editors along with Baker. They evidently believed there might be risk in doing so, because at the same time, they announced that "anyone interested in applying for a permanent position as bodyguard" should contact them immediately.¹²² The editors had begun to receive hate mail and harassing or threatening phone calls.¹²³

A letter to the editor was pleased that "students, faculty and others have a place to say what they think, not what the Administration wants to hear."¹²⁴ The paper continued to say things the administration did not want to hear. It bashed the "publish or perish" mandate and its effect on teachers, and it sniped at the "pettiness" of

¹²⁰Ibid., 1 May 1967.

¹²¹Baker interview 1.

¹²²Notes, 6 April 1967.

¹²³Baker interview 2.

¹²⁴Notes, 6 April 1967.

faculty and administration politics. It dedicated a short E.M. Forster poem to the faculty. The poem asked "what shall kindle the light within?" Notes did not seem to think that SMU could.¹²⁵

When a congratulatory letter asked how long the paper could last, the editors responded, "As long as we keep making our point and don't crap out."¹²⁶ What had begun as a "lark" in response to a teacher's challenge had become more serious.¹²⁷ The same letter writer asked rhetorically where their money was coming from. The editors rejoindered that "there are senile millionaires in this community who would squander their coins on practically any scheme."¹²⁸ But, in fact, they needed money. The "lark" was an expensive undertaking, and most of the money came out of their pockets. "It was our beer money, pocket change," Arnold said.¹²⁹ How long they could last depended on something more crucial than continuing to make their point-- they needed money to continue their enterprise, and so the editors sought financial help from the Student Senate.

Baker and Arnold spoke before the group.¹³⁰ They told

¹²⁵Ibid.

¹²⁶Ibid.

¹²⁷Baker interview 1.

¹²⁸Notes, 6 April 1967.

¹²⁹Arnold interview 2.

¹³⁰Ibid.

the Senate each issue cost \$54.20 to produce.¹³¹ They pledged to cover issues in depth and to devote more space to evaluation and analysis than the Campus could. They pushed Notes as filling a gap on campus, and promised to print articles from all sides of the political spectrum. The timing was perfect. The Senate happened to have a budget surplus, and it liked the idea of helping interested, committed students create interest and involvement on a campus not known for those qualities.¹³² At its 4 April 1967 meeting, the Senate voted to grant Notes \$200, which would cover approximately 40 percent of its costs, to come out with one issue a week for the rest of the semester. The editors announced their thanks for the grant, which came with "no strings attached," other than the obligation to come out with a total of seven more issues before the semester ended and to account for how the money was spent.¹³³

Giving Notes money was a brave move. The very next day a letter to the editor in the Campus blasted Notes. "I had to look twice to see if I wasn't reading Pravda."¹³⁴ An alumnus, James E. Dobkin, Jr., asked why he should give to SMU's sustentation fund when the Senate "throws away needed

¹³¹Campus, 7 April 1967.

¹³²Ibid., 18 April 1967.

¹³³Notes, 6 April 1967.

¹³⁴Campus, 5 April 1967.

money. . .to subsidize the publication of such trash as NFTU?"¹³⁵ He was undoubtedly not the only alumnus who felt that way. SMU Student Senator Tyler Baker defended the grant. "The Senate is not endorsing what the Underground says. . . .In giving \$200, the Senate gave a chance."¹³⁶

Besides money, Notes needed help in the form of workers. Putting out the paper regularly was hard for students who had a lot on their plates already. The editors sought volunteers for help "dragging SMU into the year 1967." They aimed their plea at kindred spirits, those who were "frustrated at SMU" and depressed by finding college was nothing but a "knowledge factory," but anyone was welcome--"Democrats, Republicans, pacifists, militarists, blacks, whites."¹³⁷ If any Republicans or militarists volunteered, it was not apparent from the stories Notes continued to run, which were liberal and antiwar.

The editors announced future issues would include a list of incoming and outgoing SMU professors; a political forum; a story about birth-control pills at SMU; their most ambitious undertaking, "nitty-gritty evaluations" of candidates for the upcoming Student Senate elections based on three-page questionnaires; and "whatever else three demented young editors can come up with between now and the

¹³⁵Ibid., 11 April 1967.

¹³⁶Ibid., 18 April 1967.

¹³⁷Notes, 6 April 1967.

next deadline!"¹³⁸ The latter plan was the only one they managed to follow through on during the remainder of the semester.¹³⁹

The paper continued its criticism of SMU unabated. The fifth issue, at fourteen pages, was the biggest yet, and twelve of those pages attacked SMU for its lack of academic freedom. The issue began with a string of excuses from the editors: They did not get the promised election issue out; an editor (Haile) had quit; and they could not keep a printer--after only one issue, four printers in a row refused to print another. All those factors, more than the "demented" minds of the editors, probably contributed to the issue--there was space to fill and not enough people and time to get the intended election issue out. Enter Leonard Magruder, a man with a gripe against SMU, pages of documentation and diatribe, and at least some cash.

Magruder was a disgruntled former psychology department instructor, and the issue was largely his personal vendetta against SMU, the psychology department, academia, and the entire psychology and psychiatry Establishments as well, but mainly SMU, which almost two years before had not renewed Magruder's one-year contract. Twelve unrelenting pages detailed his every grievance and included letters back and forth between Magruder and administration officials. The

¹³⁸Ibid.

¹³⁹Ibid., 17 March 1967 to 10 May 1967.

"editors," who later turned out to be only Baker for this issue,¹⁴⁰ reminded readers that "this media is highly experimental" and cautioned that "you may not want to read your way through it," which was probably accurate. The issue was so long that there was even a table of contents.¹⁴¹

The Magruder "academic freedom" special issue of Notes led to accusations of libel from SMU President Willis M. Tate, an apology from Baker for not getting permission from people involved in Magruder's dispute to reprint their letters, a ragging from the Campus, and a public airing of the editors' dirty laundry when Brown bashed Baker in the next issue for giving so much space over to a personal grudge. Brown lambasted Magruder's tirade and claimed Magruder paid for the issue.¹⁴² Staff brouhahas were common at underground newspapers, which were frequently awash with staff dissension in their early years, before they gained a degree of legitimacy based on growing professionalism. The question of whether Magruder paid for the space is murky.¹⁴³ Whatever the case, the Magruder issue confirmed the newspaper's contention that it was "experimental," and it continued the controversy surrounding

¹⁴⁰Ibid., 1 May 1967.

¹⁴¹Ibid., 27 April 1967.

¹⁴²Ibid.

¹⁴³Ibid., 4 May 1967; and Baker interview 2.

the newspaper.

The two remaining editors were learning how to produce a newspaper as they went along, and they freely admitted their shortcomings. An editorial in the sixth issue explained that everything was going along fine until they were overwhelmed by a confluence of circumstances beyond their control. They had received fifty responses, far more than they anticipated, to the candidate questionnaires they had sent out for the campus elections. Then there was Brown's public tongue-lashing of Baker for the ill-advised Magruder issue. On top of all that, Haile quit because finals were coming up, and he found himself overextended.¹⁴⁴ At least that was the official story. The real reasons were more complex. TI had learned of Haile's role in the Notes escapade, and although his bosses could never prove anything, they had a serious talk with him, in which criminal charges were mentioned. In addition, Haile and Baker were parting ways philosophically and politically about the direction the paper should take. Haile believed Notes should exist strictly as a political-action tool; Baker, however, wanted to give the paper broader appeal, and that meant being more countercultural. "That stuff was bullshit for me," Haile said.¹⁴⁵ Furthermore, the little paper was already experiencing

¹⁴⁴Ibid.

¹⁴⁵Baker interview 1; and Haile interview.

growing pains. "As fledglings in the paper business, we only claimed to be experimental," Brown wrote.¹⁴⁶

The paper looked and read like what it was, the product of idealistic amateurs who were learning as they went along. The writing was at once overwrought, serious, intellectual, idealistic, moralistic, occasionally long-winded, but with a sense of absurdity. It seemed clear, however, that the idealistic amateurs had serious intentions. By the seventh issue, Notes had joined the Underground Press Syndicate (UPS), some indication it hoped to be around for the duration. The new UPS was a sort of Associated Press for the underground press, which in March 1967 listed twenty-two member newspapers in the United States and Canada, and three in Great Britain, with a total circulation of 264,000. Its purpose was "to facilitate the communication of information which the Establishment press ignores, suppresses, or never dreamed of." It helped "anti-Establishment, avant garde, new-Left, youth oriented" publications share news, features, and advertising.¹⁴⁷

The semester was winding down, and so was the paper, with issue eight down to four pages. The editors knew they needed advertising to continue. That same issue contained the first advertisement for display and personal

¹⁴⁶Notes, 1 May 1967.

¹⁴⁷East Village Other 15 April-1 May 1967, cited in Notes, 4 May 1967.

advertising. Display ads could be bought for \$17.50 a quarter page or \$50 a full page, and personal ads would be ten cents per word with a fifteen-word minimum.¹⁴⁸

Even so, as the end of the semester approached, things looked shaky for Notes. The ninth and last issue of the semester appeared 9 May 1967, the day before final examinations began. It was a token issue at only two pages, published strictly to meet the contractual obligations when they accepted \$200 from Student Senate. Much of the cover was given over to reproducing the university's exam schedule. School was almost out, and although Notes said it would publish in the summer and "hoped" to publish in the fall and advertised for subscribers for \$2.00 for the summer and \$5.00 for the fall, it was uncertain what would come next. Anything might happen.¹⁴⁹

Then Brent LaSalle Stein knocked on the door of Baker's house on McFarlin Avenue in University Park, sporting a big flower behind one ear, a woman on one arm, and a big grin, which Baker surmised was from having smoked "a terrific amount of marijuana," and said, "God, you guys need some help with your visuals," which Baker knew "was absolutely true--it looked terrible."¹⁵⁰

Thus began a working relationship with Baker that

¹⁴⁸Notes, 5 May 1967.

¹⁴⁹Ibid., 9 May 1967.

¹⁵⁰Baker interview 1.

lasted on and off for six years. Moreover, for the next three years, Stein would have a considerable influence on Notes and on Dallas's "underground," or counterculture.

CHAPTER IV

STONEY BURNS AND THE DALLAS ESTABLISHMENT:

SEX, DRUGS, AND ROCK 'N' ROLL VERSUS CONSERVATIVE VALUES

Brent LaSalle Stein was born 4 December 1942 at St. Paul Hospital in Dallas, Texas, two years and a month before the first wave of postwar Baby Boomers was born. His father, Roy Stein, owned a commercial printing firm, Allied Printing Company; his forebears, according to family tradition, had been printers as far back as the sixteenth century. His mother, Esther Stein, was, like most women of that era, a homemaker. His only sister was born three years later.¹

Stein grew up comfortable, middle-class, and Jewish. His family lived in an impeccably manicured North Dallas neighborhood in the affluent segment of town most of Dallas's power brokers called home, only a few miles from where Doug Baker's family later moved. Stein attended Hillcrest High School, of which it was said, in those pre-

¹James McEnteer, Fighting Words: Independent Journalists in Texas (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992), 141; Mark Seal, "Stoney Burns: Alive and Living Well in Dallas," Dallas Life magazine, Dallas Morning News, 2 January 1983, 16;

Brent LaSalle Stein, interview by Bonnie Lovell (Dallas, Texas, 28 April 1998), University of North Texas Oral History Collection, OH 1241, (Denton, Texas: University of North Texas Oral History Program, 1998), 1-2, cited hereinafter as Stein interview.

busing days, that its Gentile students could hold a meeting in the telephone booth, referring to the school's large percentage of Jewish students. Stein loved rock 'n' roll. He experienced an epiphany the first time he heard "That'll Be the Day," by early rock 'n' roller Buddy Holly, and Holly became one of his heroes. Following Holly's example, Stein learned to play the guitar and played in bands in high school and college. Stein graduated from Hillcrest in 1960 at the age of seventeen.²

Stein attended the University of Oklahoma in Norman for two and a half years and spent one summer at Arlington State University in Arlington, Texas, before transferring to the University of Arizona in Tucson. Stein was a member of Sigma Alpha Mu, the Jewish fraternity known as the Sammies.³ His high-school English teachers, Miss Taylor and Mrs. Cox, had discouraged his interest in writing, so he felt vindicated when he earned the advanced-placement English class's only A from a prestigious writing teacher at the University of Oklahoma.⁴ Stein was not really interested in politics, but while in college he heard about

²Warren Leslie, Dallas: Public and Private, Aspects of an American City (New York: Grossman Publishers, 1964), 51; McEnteer, Fighting Words, 141-142; Seal, "Stoney Burns," 10; and Stein interview, 2, 5.

³Stein interview, 6.

⁴McEnteer, Fighting Words, 142; and Notes, 16-30 September 1967.

the Freedom Riders, the African-American and white civil rights workers who rode buses through Mississippi and the Deep South to challenge the segregation of interstate bus depots. He fleetingly considered joining them, but it was only a passing thought--after all, it was dangerous. Civil rights workers were getting killed, and he was only a college kid.⁵

Stein graduated from the University of Arizona at the age of 21 with a degree in marketing and advertising in 1964 and returned to Dallas hoping to begin a career in a field related to his major. He sold advertising for a radio station for a year; he then went to work as a printing salesman for his father's company, Allied Printing, by then Dallas's largest commercial printing company.⁶

Then in the spring of 1967, on a business trip to Chicago, the 24-year-old Stein smoked marijuana for the first time, an experience which affected him profoundly. He observed how marijuana had changed his college roommate, who introduced him to marijuana, from a violent "wild man" to a "mellow," laid-back person. Trying marijuana happened around the same time Stein had begun thinking seriously about his life and what he wanted to do with it. He was questioning his values. From the moneymaking, business-oriented ethos he had grown up accepting, Stein began to

⁵Stein interview, 2, 5.

⁶Ibid., 2-3; and McEnteer, Fighting Words, 142.

think about the importance of doing work he loved and believed in. He began to believe it was important for people who felt strongly about things to write about those things. In the future, he would remember those things--experiencing marijuana, wanting meaningful work, and wanting to write about what he believed in--as being connected.⁷

Also about that same time, Stein became aware that Doug D. Baker, Jr., and several other students were publishing Notes from the Underground: The SMU Off-Campus Free Press, an alternative to the school newspaper at SMU, where Stein served as an advisor to the Sammies.⁸ The paper sounded as if it were doing the sort of thing he had been thinking about,⁹ but when he saw it, he was disappointed. It was "sloppy," unprofessional, and unattractive.¹⁰ Stein thought he could help remedy that, and so he contacted Baker and offered his services.¹¹ When Stein showed up at Baker's place in University Park, his intention was only to help Notes with graphic design, to help make it more appealing to the eye. His background gave him just the

⁷McEnteer, Fighting Words, 145; Seal, "Stoney Burns," 16; and Stein interview, 3.

⁸McEnteer, Fighting Words, 142; and Stein interview; 6.

⁹Stein interview, 3.

¹⁰McEnteer, Fighting Words, 145.

¹¹Stein interview, 6.

experience Notes needed.¹²

Baker was grateful for the offer of help. He knew the paper lacked visual impact, and the paper was also short-handed.¹³ J.D. Arnold was spending the summer working as a hostler in the railroad yards in Chicago to earn money for next semester,¹⁴ and the other students who intermittently helped out had left campus for the summer. Only Baker and Brown, who were by then romantically involved, were still around. Stein joined Notes in May 1967. Because Stein did not want to embarrass his parents or his advertising clients, he began using a nom de plume, Stoney Burns,¹⁵ a name which eventually everybody except his parents, Baker, and arresting officers called him.¹⁶ Baker and Brown, who married during that summer, were still listed as the editors on the masthead, using the designations Pluto and Perspehone, alluding to the underworld of mythology as well as to their own relationship, and Burns was listed as

¹²Ibid., 4.

¹³Doug D. Baker, Jr., interview by author, Alameda, California, 29 October 1998, cited hereinafter as Baker interview 1.

¹⁴J.D. Arnold. Telephone interview by author, 20 April 1999. Cited hereinafter as Arnold interview 2.

¹⁵Hereafter, I will refer to Stein as Stoney Burns, the name by which he is now known, except in legal documents.

¹⁶Baker interview 1; McEnteer, Fighting Words, 145; Seal, "Stoney Burns," 16; and Stein interview, 4.

Cyclopes, Image Maker;¹⁷ however, Burns's imprint was all over the tenth issue.¹⁸ Soon, Burns had become Rex, his name falling between Baker's and Brown's.

Burns wanted to professionalize Notes,¹⁹ and the changes he helped inaugurate were immediately apparent. For starters, there was Notes's purview.²⁰ Although Notes at first kept its sub-title, The SMU Off-Campus Free Press, the paper went from being a publication concerned with campus issues, and therefore mainly of interest to like-minded SMU students and faculty, to concerning itself with Dallas as a whole. The editors began selling the paper on the street charging first ten cents and eventually twenty-five cents for the paper, which had previously been distributed free on campus.²¹

The most noticeable change was the look of the newspaper. Burns wanted to make it "more fun to look at,"

¹⁷McEnteer, Fighting Words, 146; Notes, 27 May 1967; Stein interview, 4.

¹⁸Notes, 27 May 1967.

¹⁹Dallas Observer, 8 December, 1988.

²⁰O'Connor, Colleen, "Dallas Underground Surfacing," Dallas Journalism Review 1 (May-June 1973): 6, cited in Wells, "The Iconoclast: A Readership Survey and a Study of the Historical Evolution of an Underground Newspaper" (Master's thesis, North Texas State University, 1976), 21.

²¹Baker interview 1; See Notes, 27 May 1967-1-15 September 1970; and Poulos, Brad, "Iconoclast: The Underground Newspaper of Dallas," unpublished research paper, Journalism Department, Southern Methodist University, 1, cited in Wells, "Iconoclast," 21.

Arnold said.²² From hard-to-read pages clogged with long, typed columns with little art or white space to offer eye appeal, Notes became a graphically arresting little newspaper with cover art designed to startle and grab the eye. Before, the paper had a bland appearance, looking like the copies of typewritten pages that it was, with occasional reprints of underground cartoons as the lone element for eye appeal. Now, with its tabloid format, it looked more like a real newspaper, albeit a psychedelic one, with its title, which Burns designed using the wavy lettering popularized by the dance-poster artists in San Francisco where the hippie scene first flourished.²³

The whole tenth issue reflected Burns's talents and interests. As the Image Maker, he helped remake Notes in his own image. Besides designing the new logo, Burns wrote the cover story and took all the photographs, which he laid out in a photo collage and surrounded with hippie art.²⁴ The cover story, "Cops Start Anti-Love Campaign!" was about a thwarted love-in at downtown Dallas's Stone Place Mall, a pedestrian mall running one short block between Main and Commerce streets a half-block from the celebrated Neiman-Marcus department store. Ever since Stone Street was bricked over to become Dallas's first pedestrian walkway,

²²Arnold interview 2.

²³See Notes, 27 May 1967-2-15 September 1970.

²⁴McEnteer, Fighting Words, 145-146; Notes, 27 May 1967.

the mall had been a favored place for sidewalk preachers to exhort passersby and people sitting on its concrete benches. It had also recently become a place where some of Dallas's hippies congregated. "Stoney's article plunged Dallas into the Sixties," according to journalism professor James McEnteer in his book Fighting Words: Independent Journalists in Texas.²⁵

There was a photograph of Dallas policemen presiding over the love-in followed by lyrics from a Buffalo Springfield song: "There's something happening here. What it is ain't exactly clear. There's a man with a gun over there tellin' me I've got to beware."²⁶ The Buffalo Springfield song was written after a confrontation between police and hippies on Los Angeles's Sunset Strip; now, here was a confrontation between police and hippies in Dallas, and music served as a common language about a shared experience. Song lyrics expressed and conveyed countercultural beliefs and values. They served as a sort of shorthand, the lyrics speaking to an understanding outsiders could never share. Lyrics reinforced the sense of solidarity of the counterculture, as well as the sense of alienation from the mainstream culture.

"Over a hundred Dallas hippies tried to have a love-in

²⁵Ibid., 27 May 1967; and McEnteer, Fighting Words, 146.

²⁶Notes, 27 May 1967.

last Saturday, May 20," Burns wrote. "Unfortunately about twenty paranoid cops had a hate-in, and, baby, they had the guns," he continued.²⁷ The back page of the issue was a photo collage of the day's events, as the hippies were chased away from Stone Place Mall, then Dealey Plaza in the shadow of the Kennedy assassination site, and finally Ferris Plaza, across the street from the venerable Dallas Morning News, by the police.²⁸

"Stoney's writing began to define some of the enduring themes of the Dallas counterculture," McEnteer observed.²⁹ The entire news package--song lyrics, story, and artwork--illustrated one of the predominant countercultural themes, that of "gentle people," or "flower children," who practiced peace and love, versus the men with the guns, the Establishment. It exemplified the "us" versus "them" feeling that permeated the times--young people versus grown-ups, hippies versus "straight" society--and it was a theme that would recur in the pages of Notes.³⁰

Reporting on what may have been Dallas's first love-in, Notes conveyed the difficulty of having a love-in in Dallas, with the resistance from the police, but the coverage emphasized the potential for a feeling such as existed in

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹McEnteer, Fighting Words, 145-146.

³⁰See Notes, 27 May 1967-2-15 September 1970.

San Francisco, if on a smaller scale, and therefore helped build a feeling of community among Dallas hippies. For a brief time, the group was left undisturbed at Ferris Plaza. "Ah, Buddha has smiled on us, the park was vacant, peace and love at last, room to breathe free. The feeling now was one of joy. It is a love-in! It worked!" Burns wrote. But then the police returned and shooed off the participants, citing ordinances against loitering and walking on the grass. Burns observed, "I thought parks had grass so you could walk on it."³¹ Here was another countercultural theme--youthful innocence crushed by the realization that it existed in an adult world full of hatred and cockeyed values. The love-in participants were not doing anything wrong--they were just being--so why were the police hassling them?³²

The photos showed young people with long hair, beads, buttons, and sandals carrying flowers, young women in miniskirts, and a young man playing a recorder. The back page's photo collage was surrounded by hand-drawn flowers. The entire effect of the newly redesigned paper was arresting, if not mind-blowing, both in terms of its content and its appearance. Dallas finally had a real underground newspaper just like San Francisco and Austin did.³³

Burns introduced more themes common to the national

³¹Ibid., 27 May 1967.

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid.

counterculture in his column, "Underground Undercurrents." One such theme was that of young idealists animated by a sincere belief in the principles they had been taught in school and at church--American democratic principles and Judeo-Christian precepts--shattered by the dawning that those values were not always practiced, but were merely given lip service. There was hypocrisy everywhere they looked in the adult world--how could people not see it? Notes reprinted a judgmental remark about antiwar demonstrators by the Rev. Dr. W.A. Criswell, who was the preacher at Dallas's First Baptist Church, the nation's largest Baptist congregation and where evangelist Billy Graham had his church membership. Criswell said that protestors should be thrown in jail and he wished he were the judge, leading Burns to write, "Those are strong words from a man who preaches the gospel of the Prince of Peace."³⁴

"Christ as a hippie" was another recurrent theme in the counterculture.³⁵ Burns, who is Jewish, wrote, "If Christ had come back to Earth there with His long hair, sandals and robes, He probably would have been busted."³⁶ There were the dual messages that if Jesus returned, he would be scorned for his appearance, which was not unusual in his

³⁴Ibid., 17 June 1967.

³⁵McEnteer, Fighting Words, 146.

³⁶Notes, 27 May 1967.

day, but which would have stood out in 1960s America--like the garb of the hippies--and for his teachings of love and non-violence, which went against the prevailing ethos of the times--just like the hippies' beliefs.³⁷ In their minds, hippies were just doing what Jesus did, and they were being persecuted just as he was. A story around Easter reported Jesus's upcoming trial for such things as loitering, having no visible means of support, conducting unlawful assemblies, failing to pay taxes, and suspicion of drug use--after all, he had "visions"--and concluded, "With luck, Rome will have heard the last of this bearded troublemaker and his strange philosophy."³⁸ Hippies could relate to that.³⁹

Underlying everything was the insistent theme of freedom. Just as freedom to be able to print what they thought was one of the prime motivations for founding Notes, the freedoms guaranteed in the Bill of Rights were a constant refrain in Notes, which periodically ran "In Memoriam" notices after instances such as the breakup of the Stone Place Mall love-in. "NFTU regrets to announce the death of two near and dear friends of the citizens of Dallas: Freedom of Speech & Freedom of Lawful Assembly."⁴⁰ Young people learned these ideals in school as the basis of

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid., 16-30 April 1968.

³⁹McEnteer, Fighting Words, 145.

⁴⁰Notes, 27 May 1967.

American democracy, they believed in these ideals, and although they were finding them contrary to reality, they still believed in them. Notes, like other underground newspapers, kept reminding its readers about their constitutionally guaranteed rights.⁴¹

When Burns showed up at Baker's house, although he was sporting a flower behind his ear, he was dressed like the salesman he was, wearing a suit and short hair. By summer he had let his hair grow to his shoulders, inspiring his father to fire him. It was then that Burns began to devote all his attention to Notes. It was not long before Notes became his show to run.⁴²

In November 1967, Baker and Brown left Notes, at least officially. The powerful Clint W. Murchison, Jr., who ran the company where Baker's father worked, passed along an edict through the senior Baker that his son needed to end his association with the paper. In later years, Murchison was credited with spiffing up Dallas's post-assassination image by founding the Dallas Cowboys and turning them into "America's team";⁴³ in 1967, Murchison seemed to be more concerned that Baker's involvement in the controversial newspaper would tarnish his company's image in a case of guilt by association. Because his father was financing his

⁴¹Ibid., 27 May 1967-2-15 September 1970.

⁴²Baker interview 1; and Stein interview, 3-4.

⁴³Dallas Morning News, 7 March 1999.

and Brown's education, Baker believed he had to comply.⁴⁴ Ten issues after joining the fray, Burns took the helm as editor, and Baker and Brown were no longer on the masthead.⁴⁵ Although Baker still was involved, writing under the pseudonym Scott London through the spring semester of 1968, he could no longer be publicly associated with the paper. Baker and Brown divorced, and in the summer of 1968 Baker moved to California to work building a tunnel through the Tehachapi Mountains to earn money to pay off some of the debt he had accumulated during his brief marriage. Baker regularly sent Burns money, which helped Notes's always precarious finances, and contributed stories and book reviews, writing as Scott London, but the paper was now Burns's baby, and, as such, the paper more and more reflected Burns's style and sensibilities.⁴⁶

Burns praised Baker for having persisted in the face of intense pressures.⁴⁷ "I would have quit long ago if I was under the same pressures." Burns sounded reluctant, but game. "Doug Baker, I hate you. You always make me do

⁴⁴Baker interview 1; and Doug D. Baker interview, Jr., telephone interview by author, 15 March 1999, cited hereinafter as Baker interview 2.

⁴⁵McEnteer, Fighting Words, 151-152; and Notes, 1-15 December 1967; 16-31 December 1967.

⁴⁶Baker interview 1; See Notes, 27 May 1967-1-15 September 1970; and Poulos, "Iconoclast," 2, cited in Wells, "Iconoclast," 26.

⁴⁷McEnteer, Fighting Words, 152.

things like this and it's painful and I don't like to do it and I don't want to, but I accept it and screw you too, even though you are right."⁴⁸ Baker had faced immense pressures--from SMU, from his family, and from his father's boss.⁴⁹ Little did Burns imagine the pressures he would soon face. Baker later wrote, "No sooner had I stopped doing Notes than all my personal problems regarding the paper were his. And they multiplied geometrically."⁵⁰

The twentieth issue of Notes was the first with Burns in full command,⁵¹ leaving Burns at the helm of Notes during the earliest, most tumultuous years of the Dallas counterculture,⁵² the years when Dallas first realized those crazy hippie ideas had blown into Dallas from the East and West coasts.

While SMU may have been more bemused by Notes than anything in the spring semester of 1967, by the fall semester, SMU had had enough. SMU President Dr. Willis M. Tate requested Notes remove any mention of SMU in its title,⁵³ and finally kicked it off campus, calling it

⁴⁸Notes, 1-15 December 1967.

⁴⁹Baker interviews 1-2; Baker interview, 23 May 1974, cited in Wells, "Iconoclast," 23.

⁵⁰Dallas News, 14-27 October 1970.

⁵¹Notes, 1-15 December, 1967.

⁵²Wells, "Iconoclast," 26.

⁵³Notes, 15-31 August 1967.

"detrimental to the best interests of the University and contrary to its purposes,"⁵⁴ and expelled an unrepentant Arnold for defying the school's ban against selling Notes on campus.⁵⁵ It hardly mattered because, by then, the editors saw themselves as being bigger than SMU.⁵⁶ When SMU banned all Underground Press Syndicate newspapers from campus, Burns responded in his typical irreverent fashion by banning SMU and claiming the right to ban all Southwest Conference schools and other members of the Methodist Church.⁵⁷ When SMU renewed the ban on Notes for the 1968-1969 school year, Notes wrote, "We will continue to ignore your silly little ban."⁵⁸ Compared to the official opposition Notes was destined to run into from the city of Dallas, the campus ban did seem "silly" and inconsequential.

With Burns involved, the paper became increasingly more professional. Its paper stock improved. Its regularity improved. Once it had come out "whenever we feel like it"; now it strived to meet a twice-a-month schedule. News dealers sold the paper. First there were only two--the

⁵⁴Ibid., October 17-31 1967; November 1967; 16-31 December, 1967.

⁵⁵Ibid., 1-15 December 1967; Arnold interview 2; and McEnteer, Fighting Words, 152.

⁵⁶Arnold interview 2; Baker interview 1; Baker interview, 23 May 1974, cited in Wells, "Iconoclast," 21; and Stein interview, 8.

⁵⁷Notes, 16-30 April 1968.

⁵⁸Ibid., 16 August-3 September, 1968.

Newsland newsstand on downtown Elm Street next door to the Palace Theatre and Bridwell Library, which was the library of SMU's Perkins School of Theology. By January 1968, readers could buy Notes at eight places, including the Gramophone Shop at the Quadrangle, and both Doubleday bookstores--one downtown and one at NorthPark Shopping Center in North Dallas.⁵⁹

With Burns involved, the paper also became more countercultural. "Stoney himself was a cultural resource," Arnold said, and Burns brought the full power of that resource to bear in the pages of Notes. Burns had actually done, or at least been exposed to, things that the other Notes editors believed in theoretically, but had not yet experienced to the same degree as the slightly older, slightly more worldly Burns.⁶⁰

Everette E. Dennis and William L. Rivers found in Other Voices: The New Journalism in America, published in 1974, that underground newspapers came along in three waves; they changed as the counterculture changed. The earliest papers were characterized by psychedelic art and stories about hallucinogenic drugs, sex, and Eastern religions. As the war in Vietnam heated up, so did the anti-war movement, and the second wave of papers had a more radical political

⁵⁹Ibid., 17 June 1967; 17-31 January 1968.

⁶⁰Arnold interview 2.

content.⁶¹ Notes generally followed Dennis and Rivers's analysis; it began as the psychedelic era ended and the radical era began. Richard H. Wells, in his thesis, "The Iconoclast: A Readership Survey and a Study of the Historical Evolution of an Underground Newspaper," found that "the early days [of Notes] were concerned with politics and the radical movement,"⁶² and that its coverage was angry.⁶³ The years with Burns as editor fell during the political years, but, the paper was, like the times, a hodgepodge, with its content underscoring the two predominant strains of the counterculture--the political and the cultural. A Notes cover described its contents best: "MISH MASH." The cover was illustrated with photos and art related to the stories found inside, which ranged from the "heavy"--the plight of Rio Grande Valley farm workers--to the frivolous.⁶⁴

The news stories and headlines in Notes, in typical underground newspaper fashion, were rife with opinion. Even entertainment reviews were not immune from political commentary--a review of an Up with People! show said "the American Way of Life . . . includes segregation, poverty,

⁶¹Everette E. Dennis and William L. Rivers, Other Voices: The New Journalism in America (San Francisco: Canfield Press, 1974), 139-140.

⁶²Wells, "Iconoclast," 4-5.

⁶³Ibid., 26.

⁶⁴Notes, 16-30 April, 1968.

states-rights, and the use of napalm."⁶⁵ Notes had a definite point of view. It was against the war in Vietnam, against racism, and against hypocrisy. It was for freedom in every way, shape, and form.⁶⁶

To Burns, freedom of the press meant the right to publish stories even if they were controversial or critical of the Establishment, and Notes exercised that right. For him, freedom of the press was an empty concept if it forbade controversial or critical stories. Besides printing anti-Establishment opinions, Notes broke the barrier on printing four-letter words in Dallas. In the second issue, J.D. Arnold had criticized a free-speech movement protestor for carrying a placard bearing a word "that any moron can write on the bathroom wall," suggesting the young woman would shock the Establishment more with the words "War" or "Air Pollution."⁶⁷ Notes's position on the use of the Anglo-Saxon words, however, was that using them in writing reflected language as really used among a certain segment of society, and, furthermore, that freedom of speech allowed them the absolute right to print them. Despite the paper's claim to that right, its early printers thought otherwise, and for a number of issues, whenever the word "fuck" appeared in copy, the printers substituted blank spaces

⁶⁵Ibid., November 1967.

⁶⁶Ibid., 27 May 1967-2-15 September 1970.

⁶⁷Ibid., 29 March 1967.

where two or more letters of the word should be. When the "F" word finally made it into print in Notes, it was "totally by accident." A printer had failed to read the copy. After that, it was no holds barred on the use of such language, which offended mainstream society and added to the controversy surrounding Notes.⁶⁸

The Vietnam war was the main issue of the day, and Notes devoted much of its space to the war and the movement against the war.⁶⁹ The news Notes presented was not something readers found in the mainstream press. Television journalist Floyd Kalber said, "To the degree that we in the media paid any attention at all to that small, dirty war in those years, we almost wholly reported the position of the Government."⁷⁰ Lauren Kessler, in her book The Dissident Press: Alternative Journalism in America, found that underground newspapers "covered peace marches and speeches, gave editorial support to the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese, offered radical interpretations of war events,

⁶⁸Ibid., 27 May 1967-2-15 September 1970; and Baker interview 1.

⁶⁹See Notes, 27 May 1967-2-15 September 1970; and Stein interview, 12.

⁷⁰Arthur Kaul, "The Unraveling of America," chap. in Lloyd Chiasson, Jr., ed., The Press in Times of Crisis. Contributions to the Study of Mass Media and Communications, no. 48 (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1995), 178.

and went on long tirades against U.S. imperialism."⁷¹ Notes was no exception, for it was unequivocal in its opposition to the war. It ran regular boxes with the war's "Profit and Loss Statement." The profit side of the chart showed the latest lucrative Vietnam War contracts by Dallas-area defense contractors, such as Texas Instruments, Bell Helicopter, and LTV Aerospace. On the loss side were the names, ranks, and ages of the latest Vietnam casualties. The charts were a stark example of what Notes perceived as America's skewed values--America valued big bucks for corporate America more than the lives of the young Americans being killed in Vietnam. When Texas Instruments chairman Mark Shepherd, Jr., said the end of the war would hurt TI's profits, Notes pointed out TI's sales for 1967 totalled \$568,500,000, and commented, "War's hell, but peace is worse."⁷²

Another big concern of Notes was racism.⁷³ For all practical purposes, Dallas in 1967 was still a segregated city. Although SMU had enrolled its first black students a few years before, the city schools would only integrate slowly and under court order. Compared to the direct action tactics used by activists in such Deep South cities as

⁷¹Lauren Kessler, The Dissident Press: Alternative Journalism in America, Sage Comtext Series, vol. 13 (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1983), 150.

⁷²Notes, 17-31 March 1968; 27 May 1967-2-15 September 1970.

⁷³Ibid., 27 May 1967-2-15 September 1967.

Birmingham, Alabama, the civil rights movement in Dallas was more behind-the-scenes and less confrontational, concentrating on meeting its objectives by legal action. Dallas's downtown department stores integrated peacefully, a feat which was presented as a fait accompli by Dallas civic leaders, who engineered the coup, fearful that if they did not take charge of the situation, Dallas business would be hurt if there was racial unrest. It was done for economic reasons, not ethical ones, and it was only a small step.⁷⁴

Burns and Notes condemned racism, another place where teachings conflicted with reality. Dallas prided itself on all its churches, so, the thinking went, how could a city that claimed to be so Christian treat African-Americans in such an un-Christian fashion? Burns wrote that Vietnam veterans were being recruited as policemen. "This makes good sense. These GI's have already been trained to kill yellow people, now they just have to learn to rechannel their hostilities toward black people."⁷⁵ An illustration for a story by two lawyers about a person's rights if stopped or arrested showed a black man handcuffed and kneeling with one policeman aiming a gun at him and another policeman's billy club raised over his head about to bash it

⁷⁴Leslie, Dallas, 71-74; and Robert Weisbrot. Freedom Bound: A History of America's Civil Rights Movement. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990), 39-40.

⁷⁵Notes, 3-15 February 1968.

in.⁷⁶ Ernest McMillan, the field secretary for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in Dallas, wrote in Notes about the problems of organizing African-Americans in Dallas where blacks had been conditioned to be docile.

"Never has there been an angry voice from the ghetto that screams, 'Kiss my unruly Black ass, motherfuckers!'"⁷⁷

A headline screamed, "He's Black -- \$20,000 Peace Bond," when SNCC members Fred Bell and Ernest McMillan were arrested for allegedly threatening a man while distributing leaflets. The story commented, "Even the accused assassin of President John F. Kennedy was only held on \$10,000 bond. But he wasn't black. Such is 'white' justice in Dallas."⁷⁸ When a SNCC leader was convicted and sentenced to ten years in prison for vandalism in a supermarket protest, Notes pointed out the defendant was tried by a "typical 'peer' group -- twelve white, middle-class Dallasites."⁷⁹ When University Park police stopped an SMU foreign exchange student from Africa who was driving two SNCC members home and subsequently handcuffed him, the police apologized after learning the driver attended SMU. Notes crowed, "The cops had mistaken an African for a nigger."⁸⁰ Most African-

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Ibid., 17-31 March 1968.

⁷⁸Ibid., 1-15 July 1968.

⁷⁹Ibid., 4-17 September 1968.

⁸⁰Ibid., 6-19 August 1969.

Americans probably thought the Notes editors were "just a bunch of white kids trying to do good," Baker said,⁸¹ but the fact is that Notes provided a voice for anger in the black community and disseminated that voice beyond the bounds of the black community so that it was heard by people who might not otherwise be exposed to this side of the African-American experience in Dallas. Here was that "angry voice from the ghetto," and Notes made it available among the well-educated, white children of middle-class Dallas.

Besides running stories with a definite attitude about the issues of the day, Notes devoted plenty of space to important elements of the countercultural lifestyle: sexual freedom, use of hallucinogens and other drugs, and rock music, the unholy trinity that was popularly shortened to "sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll," a variation on the White Panthers' manifesto, "rock and roll, dope, and fucking in the streets."⁸²

In the United States in the 1960s, sex was still in the closet. Although there was a sexual revolution under way, fueled by the development of an effective birth-control pill, the popularity of Playboy magazine with its hedonistic philosophy, and a Supreme Court ruling that loosened the restrictions on what was considered obscene, one would hardly know it. Sex was still something only hinted at or

⁸¹Baker interview 1.

⁸²Notes, 8-21 January 1969.

winked about by polite society; it was certainly barely mentioned in mainstream newspapers. Although the sexual revolution was changing people's sexual behavior, laws lagged behind. In Massachusetts, it was still illegal for a doctor to discuss birth control except with married couples. Even where it was not illegal, doctors often would not prescribe birth-control pills or devices for unmarried women unless they were engaged or said they were.

"Love" was one of the themes of the counterculture, and it referred to more than just love for mankind. "Make love, not war" was a countercultural slogan. Underground newspapers were exuberantly pro-sexual freedom, although many were also, especially in the early years before feminism began to influence them, sexist. They embraced the changing attitudes toward sex, believing, "If it feels good, do it." Sex was beautiful and natural, and underground newspapers celebrated it. Their pages resonated with a lusty, uninhibited appreciation of sexuality. Some underground newspapers were known mostly for their sexual content, especially their sexually oriented classified advertisements.⁸³

Notes did not emphasize sexual material to the extent that some other underground papers did;⁸⁴ sexual matter was

⁸³Laurence Leamer, The Paper Revolutionaries: The Rise of the Underground Press (New York: Simon and Schuster), 173-177.

⁸⁴Wells, "Iconoclast," 24.

a natural part of life and therefore appeared in its pages as a natural part of the newspaper. Notes ran informative stories about various forms of birth control and their effectiveness, and about abortions, which were then illegal in the United States. When Notes ran a list of Mexican abortionists provided by an abortion-rights activist in California in "a very groovy gesture," it had to run a correction calling the out-of-date list a "DANGEROUS BUMMER" and giving the name and address of the woman in San Francisco who could provide a current list.⁸⁵ In early issues Notes told women who wanted abortions to call the Notes office, and the editors would provide them with information. In later issues, the paper ran advertisements from abortion clinics in California, which had legalized abortion. Notes also ran cartoons featuring nudity by both sexes, drawings of voluptuous women, suggestive advertisements for movies that the major Dallas newspapers would not accept, occasional provocative classified advertisements, and exhibited an openness about sex that now seems commonplace but was then downright revolutionary. When a downtown movie theater was raided for showing a "skin flick," Burns made his stance explicit: "Sex isn't pornographic, but killing is."⁸⁶

The paper's sexual content brought two arrests for

⁸⁵Notes, 17-31 October 1967; 1-15 December 1967.

⁸⁶Ibid., 3-16 March 1968; 27 May 1967-2-15 September 1970.

Burns in 1968 for possession of pornography, which ended up in the overturning of Texas's obscenity laws.⁸⁷ Notes's gleeful headline proclaimed: "Pornography law fucked."⁸⁸ Before it was over, the case, defended by the American Civil Liberties Union, went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, which found the law should not have been declared unconstitutional because Burns had not suffered "irreparable injury."⁸⁹

After a 1970 pornography arrest, cartoonist Charlie Oldham went back to the drawing board and redrew the offending cartoon. Whereas once it had depicted a sexual situation, now it depicted violence against a woman and the comment, "Children can be corrupted by sex, but violence is as Amerikan as apple pie and imperialism."⁹⁰ To Notes, this was another example of America's skewed values--the new cartoon was acceptable; sex was not.

When an exuberant Roger B. Jones fell in at a downtown miniskirt parade, sponsored by KLIF radio station, wearing not even a miniskirt, Notes ran his picture on the cover, enraging concerned citizen Charles Robert Poteet, who went before the Dallas City Council trying to get a ban on

⁸⁷McEnteer, Fighting Words, 155-157; Notes, 6 November 1968; Poulos, "Iconoclast," 8, and Press Freedoms Under Pressure, The Twentieth Century Fund, 104, cited in Wells, "Iconoclast," 27-28.

⁸⁸McEnteer, Fighting Words, 161; Notes, 2 July 1969.

⁸⁹McEnteer, Fighting Words, 162-163, 167.

⁹⁰Notes, 18 February-3 March 1970.

selling Notes to minors.⁹¹ Poteet said, "If we continue the way we are for the next ten years, people will be mating in the streets of Dallas."⁹² Laurence Leamer pointed out in The Paper Revolutionaries: The Rise of the Underground Press that the City Council overwhelmingly agreed, despite the fact that Dallas had at least twenty pornographic movie theaters and the same number of sex book stores. He believed it was not the "limited sexual content of Dallas Notes but its context," which offended Dallas, a city scared by the "youth-peace-sex-dope-love convulsion" that seemed about to engulf it.⁹³

However, a more serious outrage against society's rules was the advocacy of hallucinogenic drugs, especially the mildly hallucinogenic marijuana and the potently psychedelic LSD, which was one of the cornerstones of the counterculture. Hippies smoked marijuana or "dropped" acid for a number of reasons, among them the belief that hallucinogens expanded a user's consciousness and made the user aware of the unity of all life--maybe even made the user see God. And then there was the feel-good factor--getting high was fun. Dr. Timothy Leary, who had been fired from Harvard University for his LSD experiments, proselytized for the use of LSD, and in California, Ken

⁹¹Ibid., 17-30 June 1970; and McEnteer, Fighting Words, 165.

⁹²Leamer, Paper Revolutionaries, 141.

⁹³Ibid.

Kesey did more than any esoteric academic to further LSD's popularity. Young people saw their parents drinking cocktails, smoking cigarettes, and popping prescription pills; they believed their parents were hypocritical to condemn marijuana and LSD, which they thought had so many beneficial effects. After all, with LSD "...you can hear the Universal Symphony, with God singing solo and the Holy Ghost on drums," or so Hunter S. Thompson wrote in a New York Times magazine story about the Haight-Ashbury hippie scene.⁹⁴

Hippies dismissed claims that marijuana was addictive as nothing more than propaganda and scare tactics from the Establishment, which could not be trusted to tell the truth. They generally distinguished between drugs like marijuana and LSD, which they perceived as harmless based on their own experiences, and drugs like heroin or amphetamines, which were addictive and perceived to be harmful,⁹⁵ although there was a small core of people for whom the main value of the counterculture was easy access to drugs of all kinds.⁹⁶ The straight world's stereotype of everyone with long hair as a drug user was mistaken, however; the political revolutionaries and the cultural revolutionaries tended to part company over drug use. A New York Times study on drug

⁹⁴New York Times, 14 May 1967.

⁹⁵Ibid., 17 October 1967; 22 October 1967.

⁹⁶Ibid., 8 January 1968.

use in the United States concluded that, "Although there is some overlap between these two worlds...activists rarely use drugs more powerful than marijuana and that even their use of marijuana is casual."⁹⁷

By 1967, experimentation with drugs was spreading from hip enclaves in San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury neighborhood and New York's East Village to college campuses and from there into the rest of the country. A Gallup Poll released in October 1967 reported that 6 percent of college students had tried marijuana and fewer than 1 percent had tried acid.⁹⁸ By 1969, those figures had risen to 22 percent for marijuana use and 4 percent for LSD use.⁹⁹ Even the Beatles, who in 1963 only wanted to hold your hand, in 1967 sang they would love to turn you on.

Because drug use was illegal, drug use made hippies outlaws. Their appearance branded them as probable drug users and therefore made them automatic targets of suspicion by the authorities. The extreme wariness and caution necessary to keep from being apprehended for drug possession contradicted their embrace of love and openness. They wanted to love everybody, but it was easy to become paranoid when the strange, too friendly dude at the party might be a

⁹⁷Ibid., 8 January 1968.

⁹⁸Ibid., 25 October 1967.

⁹⁹Ibid., 26 May 1969.

narc.¹⁰⁰

Hunter S. Thompson wrote that "it is not very likely that the frank, documented truth about the psychedelic underworld, for good or ill, will be illuminated at any time soon in the public prints."¹⁰¹ Indeed, the pages of the Dallas Morning News and Dallas Times-Herald testified to the fears of "straight" society toward the casual attitude of hippies and their fellow travelers toward drugs. Thompson reasoned it was impossible to write honestly about psychedelic drugs without trying them, which was an admission of guilt.¹⁰² But underground newspaper writers admitted their guilt and wrote honestly about their experiences with psychedelic drugs.

Two of the most profound experiences of Burns's life had been experiencing marijuana and LSD for the first time.¹⁰³ In keeping with his revelation that he wanted to write about what he believed in, the pages of Notes advanced countercultural beliefs about drugs and attested to the centrality of drugs in everyday hip life. This was dangerous in a state with one of the country's strictest

¹⁰⁰"Narc" is short for narcotics agent or someone who informs to narcotics agents; occasionally the term "nark" is seen. Nark is an older, British slang term for an informant; its use is not confined to someone who informs about drugs.

¹⁰¹New York Times, 14 May 1967.

¹⁰²Ibid.

¹⁰³Seal, "Stoney Burns," 10, 16.

marijuana laws on the books. Conviction for marijuana possession in Texas could send a person to jail for life on the first offense, a maximum sentence that was the harshest of any state's.¹⁰⁴

In February 1968, Notes published a special issue, Notes on Pot; the subject was everything a person ever wanted to know about marijuana but was afraid to ask, a veritable users' guide. The stories in Notes on Pot were representative of the drug-related stories Notes ran between 1967 and 1970. There were "how-to" stories: how to plant, cure, and harvest marijuana; how to process the hallucinogen psilocybin from "magic mushrooms"; how to stave off paranoia when buying cigarette-rolling papers; how to keep a dealer from cheating a customer; and how to foil the new high-tech listening devices that the Dallas Police Department was rumored to have. There was information on growing cannabis from an out-of-print 1927 U.S. Department on Agriculture bulletin for farmers. A tyro would be able to grow pot after reading this issue. News stories included the year-old findings of the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice that marijuana was not physically addictive, did not lead to heroin addiction, did not cause violence or crime, and that the arguments against marijuana deserved a fair hearing. There was also a story about the use of marijuana by soldiers in Vietnam. An

¹⁰⁴New York Times, 1 November 1970; 22 March 1971.

anti-speed article said, "It is the establishment telling you about pot and acid, but it is your own people who are talking about speed...."¹⁰⁵

In addition, the issue included the findings of a Black Market Research survey of Notes readers regarding drug use. The survey was based on one the East Village Other had done. Whether the survey results said anything definitive about drug use in Dallas is uncertain; they did say something about drug use among Notes readers who replied. Of readers responding to the survey, 98 percent had tried marijuana, and 50 percent had tried LSD. As for prescription drugs, 72 percent had tried diet pills, 71 percent barbiturates or tranquilizers, 48 percent Methedrine, 48 percent Darvon, and 35 percent Demerol. When it came to legal substances, 56 percent had tried cough syrup, 46 percent banana peel, 35 percent pepper or other foodstuffs, 36 percent morning glory seeds, and 22 percent had sniffed airplane glue. Notes noted: "The average Dallasite responding to the poll will try anything to get high, it seems." Most respondents were between the ages of nineteen and twenty-five, began smoking marijuana sometime between nineteen and twenty-one, and did not consider drug use a religious experience or a ritual. They paid from \$16 to \$25 per lid¹⁰⁶ for marijuana, which was more expensive than on the coasts. Notes on Pot summed

¹⁰⁵Notes on Pot, 16-29 February 1968.

¹⁰⁶"Lid" is a slang term for an ounce of marijuana.

up Notes's stance on pot and drugs.¹⁰⁷ In his thesis, Richard H. Wells believed the special pot issue showed that Notes was "still...searching for an identity."¹⁰⁸

Notes ran stories about drug "busts," and always took care to point out when the person arrested was the son of a prominent citizen, such as when the son of an SMU vice president was part of a drug raid in Austin.¹⁰⁹ It was not that they wanted people to be arrested; it was that "the more people who get busted the sooner pot will be legalized. When middle-class America finds out [its] own children are turning on, it can't be that bad."¹¹⁰ The paper exposed the identity of narcotics agents or informants, with photographs and known aliases. Notes warned, "Don't trust anyone you don't know well and don't smoke in large groups."¹¹¹

For the novice, there was a beginner's guide to smoking a joint, including how to inhale for maximum effect.¹¹² There were stories on a citizen's rights when stopped or arrested. There was a special "speed issue" with its cover depicting a strung-out-looking "speed freak" emphasizing in

¹⁰⁷Notes on Pot, 16-29 February 1968.

¹⁰⁸Wells, "Iconoclast," 24.

¹⁰⁹Notes, 2-15 April 1968; 16-30 April 1968.

¹¹⁰Ibid., 1-15 August 1968.

¹¹¹Ibid., 17-31 January 1968.

¹¹²Ibid., 16-31 May 1968.

no uncertain terms: "Speed kills."¹¹³ By 1970, drug news had its own page, the "dope page," with a question-and-answer column, "Advice to Dopers," and information on market conditions, including current availability and prices. There were frequent comics, or "comix," as they were called in the underground press, with drug-related content, such as Gilbert Shelton's "The Fabulous, Furry Freak Brothers," whose lives revolved around marijuana. And whenever Notes mentioned marijuana, it usually included a phrase referring to it as "a pleasant, non-addictive, harmless herb." Notes also frequently printed the disclaimer, "We never hold."¹¹⁴ This was a necessary precaution because the editors, who broadcast their beliefs about drug use through the newspaper, were under suspicion and constant surveillance. When more than once police searched the large house, where the Notes staff worked and some lived, looking for marijuana, they did not find any.¹¹⁵

All of the above violations of community standards enraged the community. From the outset Notes met with hostility. A letter to the editor said, "You and your kind are red scum & tools of the communist [sic]. You should be

¹¹³Ibid., 15 October-4 November 1969.

¹¹⁴Ibid., 15-31 August 1967; "Hold" is a slang term meaning to possess illegally, in this case marijuana.

¹¹⁵Ibid., 27 May 1967-2-15 September 1970.

investigated." The signature was illegible.¹¹⁶ By the fourteenth issue, Notes was adhering to the policy most newspapers follow of not printing unsigned letters.¹¹⁷

When Laurence Leamer looked at the underground press in 1972, he found that

Dallas Notes is an often outrageous pastiche of news, cartoons, exposes, a heavy meld of cultural articles, and an occasional nude, all put together with a gleeful, nothing-is-going-to-stop-us irreverence. This does not sit well with Dallas authorities.¹¹⁸

Indeed, Burns's troubles with Dallas authorities began right away. In June 1967, he and a cohort were arrested for selling the paper downtown at Stone Place Mall without a permit, although they had been advised by the city they didn't need one. The charges were dropped when the arresting officers did not bother to show up at the hearing; it was only a minor hassle, but it was a taste of what was to come.¹¹⁹

Hostility from individuals was one matter; hostility from individuals or institutions with power was another. On the paper's first anniversary, a Notes editorial racked up the charges against the paper's editors:

Joe Pool calls us "subversives," the Morning News calls us "filth," the "Times Herald" calls us

¹¹⁶Ibid., 27 May 1967.

¹¹⁷Ibid., 15-31 August 1967.

¹¹⁸Leamer, Paper Revolutionaries, 138.

¹¹⁹Notes, 1-14 August 1967.

"hippies," the City Council calls us "radical college students," and SMU, which spawned us, refuses to recognize our existence at all.¹²⁰

That about summed up the situation.

Besides hostility and name-calling, underground newspapers throughout the country met with opposition and harassment, including trying to get to them by harassing their printers or news dealers or street vendors, pressuring their advertisers, denying their reporters press credentials, and arresting their editors on various charges, most often obscenity.¹²¹ Notes experienced all of these. No Dallas printer would touch Notes after more than one issue, so the staff made the regular 110-mile round trip to Waco to a printer who believed in "freedom of the press and cash in advance."¹²² An advertisement seeking reporters for Notes said, "Hard work, no pay, and you'll probably get busted."¹²³ Dennis and Rivers stated:

...skirmishes with the law are commonplace with the underground press. Indeed, the spectacle of multiple police actions and legal sanctions has few parallels in the history of American

¹²⁰Ibid., 17-31 March 1968.

¹²¹John Burks, "The New Spokesmen," 23 July 1970, cited in The Age of Paranoia: How The Sixties Ended, by eds. of Rolling Stone, 55-57; Dennis and Rivers, Other Voices, 141-144; Robert J. Glessing, The Underground Press in America, with an Introduction by Richard G. Gray (Bloomington: Indiana), 103; Kessler, Dissident Press, 151; McEnteer, Fighting Words, 152, 160-161; Poulos, "Iconoclast," 2, cited in Wells, "Iconoclast," 27; and Wall Street Journal, 7 July 1969.

¹²²Baker interview 1; and Stein interview 23.

¹²³Notes, 22 January-4 February 1969.

journalism. And although the conventional press has been a fierce champion of its own freedom, it has usually been silent when underground staffers are hauled into court and jailed.¹²⁴

Tom Forcade of the Underground Press Syndicate, who gathered statistics on harassment, pointed out in 1970 that "no underground newspaper which has been suppressed has lost when its case has gone to a higher court."¹²⁵ That proved to be the case with Burns's legal hassles; that did not make them any less of a hassle, however.

Underground newspaper people in other cities also faced arrests and intimidation, so it is hard to say whether the harassment Burns and Notes staffers endured was worse because the inherent conservatism of Dallas made their flamboyant nonconformity harder to take. In the years Burns published Notes, he was arrested repeatedly, searched numerous times, and beaten up. His tires were slashed and his car shot up. The Notes office was vandalized, and equipment needed to put out the newspaper was destroyed.¹²⁶ It became a way of life to know he was under surveillance. He and Baker would go into all-night eateries in East Dallas and overhear policemen at another booth talking about how they would like to beat the bejesus out of Burns. Sometimes the police were just trying to rattle Burns, knowing he

¹²⁴Dennis and Rivers, Other Voices, 141.

¹²⁵Burks, "New Spokesmen," cited in Age of Paranoia, 56.

¹²⁶McEnteer, Fighting Words, 141, 155-158, 160-161; and Notes, 4-17 June 1969.

could overhear them; other times the policemen were serious and had no idea their intended victim was eating within uncomfortable earshot.¹²⁷ Opposing the war, supporting left-wing politics in a right-wing city, opposing the entrenched racial attitudes of a Southern city, defying conventional standards was a dangerous proposition,¹²⁸ and almost everyone who chronicles the repression aimed at the underground press in those years holds up Burns as an example.¹²⁹

It is certain that right away Burns made a powerful enemy--Dallas Congressman Joe Pool. Pool was a member of the House Un-American Activities Committee, the Communist-sniffing committee that had gained prominence during the Red Scare of the Fifties, but which had faded in the wake of Senator Joseph McCarthy's censure. Now it revived under what were perceived as new threats from the New Left and the youth movement. Pool was arrested in Arlington County, Virginia, for reckless driving after smashing into a car

¹²⁷Baker interview 1.

¹²⁸Baker interview 23 May 1974, cited in Wells, "Iconoclast," 24-25; McEnteer, Fighting Words, 153-154; Poulos, "Iconoclast," 2, cited in Wells, "Iconoclast," 27; and Stein interview, 26-27.

¹²⁹Margaret A. Blanchard, Revolutionary Sparks: Freedom of Expression in Modern America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 353; Burks, Age of Paranoia, 55-56; Forcade, Thomas King, "Obscenity: Who Really Cares?" in The Underground Reader, assembled by Mel Howard and Thomas King Forcade (New York: A Plume Book, 1972), 167; Leamer, Paper Revolutionaries, 138-139; and Abe Peck, Uncovering the Sixties: The Life and Times of the Underground Press (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), 135-136.

full of soldiers in the wee hours of the morning. Burns happened to be in Chicago when the story broke and read the story there. After a few phone calls, he ascertained the Dallas papers had kept hands off the hot potato, and Notes broke the story in Dallas.¹³⁰ McEnteer wrote:

Notes From The Underground had ordained its own destiny in the first few months of its existence. By ridiculing Joe Pool and his backers, thumbing their noses at the local media, and flaunting their lack of respect for majoritarian values, the Notes staff shocked the community and infuriated local authorities.¹³¹

Pool began denouncing Notes and the underground press, calling it Communist-inspired, and he had not only a national audience but investigative capabilities.¹³² "Not only [was] somebody paying attention to us, but somebody who's got some influence. We'd deride him, but it made you stop and think a little bit," Arnold remembered.¹³³

Most of the Vietnam and antiwar news Notes carried was from the Liberation News Service, the radical leftist news service that made news packets available to subscribers.

¹³⁰McEnteer, Fighting Words, 148; Notes, 1-14 August 1967; Geoffrey Rips, Unamerican Activities: The Campaign Against the Underground Press, with a Foreword by Allen Ginsberg, PEN American Center Report, ed. Anne Janowitz with Nancy J. Peters. (San Francisco: City Light Books, 1981) 107-108; and Stein interview, 12.

¹³¹McEnteer, Fighting Words, 148-149.

¹³²Ibid., 149, 151; Notes, 1-15 December 1967; and Stein interview, 13.

¹³³Arnold interview 2.

The same was true of New Left political news, although with Baker a "petty bureaucrat" in SDS while he was in Dallas, Arnold a co-chairman of the local chapter of SDS, and with the paper's ties to former founding editor Roy Barte Haile, Jr., and his wife, Margie Haile, who were SDS organizers, there was local and state SDS news.

What was unique about Notes and what could not be found elsewhere was news of the local counterculture scene. By writing about such things as Dallas's first love-ins, Notes helped foster a sense of community among Dallas hippies, who previously had felt themselves as being few and far between. When, the "Raven" went to California the summer on 1967 for the Monterey Pop Festival, he found it a welcome relief to be among a throng of long-haired people. "In Dallas I was always stared at."¹³⁴ By late June 1967, it was fairly well known by word of mouth that there were love-ins every Sunday afternoon at Lee Park. "Small, yes, but the nucleus [sic] was there for something groovy. No one knows how something like this starts. The word just gets passed around through the grapevine until it happens." This time, the police drove by and looked, but did not get out of their cruisers.¹³⁵ Baker credited Burns with leading the hippies to Lee Park after the city passed ordinances designed to

¹³⁴Notes, 1-14 August 1967.

¹³⁵Ibid., 8 July 1967.

stop hippies from gathering at Stone Place Mall.¹³⁶ But unlike San Francisco, where Haight-Ashbury's hippie population had soared because of media coverage, the Dallas hippie scene was in its infancy. By writing about the gatherings at Lee Park, Notes helped Dallas's nascent hippie scene coalesce.

Although Dallas hippies met with resistance, going to San Francisco for the much-hyped "Summer of Love" was not necessarily a good thing. A popular song, written to promote the Monterey Pop Festival, said, "If you're going to San Francisco, there's sure to be gentle people there." But the national hippie media reprinted dire warnings from San Francisco against a feared influx of thousands of young people. Too many hippies in a small area were overburdening Haight-Ashbury, which was unable to support them all. And not everybody in San Francisco was so gentle anymore--there had actually been murders in the Haight.¹³⁷ Notes reprinted from The Rag a warning from the San Francisco Diggers, a communal group dedicated to feeding and clothing the hippies, for kids to stay home. "Vibrations" were bad, and the whole scene was "pretty scary" with kids starving and panhandling for money.¹³⁸

¹³⁶Dallas News, 14-27 October 1970.

¹³⁷Charles Perry, The Haight-Ashbury: A History (New York: Vintage Books, 1985), 224-227

¹³⁸Notes, 17 June 1967.

In the Haight, things were "pretty scary," but in Dallas things were just "very uncool," and for entirely different reasons. "Pan" challenged Dallas "heads,"¹³⁹ asking what San Francisco had that Dallas did not. "Pan" argued that Dallas had the people to create the very things that made San Francisco distinctive--light shows and hippie businesses. What Dallas lacked, "Pan" continued, was a sense of community. "Maybe we need to create our own gurus and indigenous Diggers who can maintain their cool and still develop a community. We have the people here and now."¹⁴⁰ Notes, by providing news about love-ins and rock concerts, helped develop that sense of community. It helped spread the word that something special was happening in Dallas and thus helped create that something special in Dallas.

Burns continued to articulate the closely related countercultural themes in his column, and the stories Notes ran throughout the next three years reinforced those themes. The theme of "us" against "them" showed up in reporting the war between Dallas and the hippies, and Notes served as an advocate for "us." A headline warned, "Hippy, You Better Have \$5!" because the Dallas police planned to start arresting hippies at Stone Place Mall on vagrancy charges if

¹³⁹The slang term "head" refers to a drug user. It is a shortened form of "acidhead," meaning someone who takes LSD regularly, or the earlier "pothead," or marijuana user.

¹⁴⁰Ibid., 1-14 August 1967.

they didn't have \$5.00 on them. The article continued, "If you wear beads or buttons, you'd better also have cash."¹⁴¹ When Pal Waffle Shop, an Oak Lawn diner, refused to serve longhairs, Notes announced a sit-in.¹⁴² The eatery closed its doors early rather than serve the more than a hundred "groovy" hippies who showed up wanting service.¹⁴³

Notes helped give legitimacy to the ideas of the counterculture; as more people embraced those ideas, Notes gained some degree of legitimacy and respect. People began to take Notes seriously.¹⁴⁴

By 1970, the counterculture was less "counter." Its ideas, fashion, and music had influenced the mainstream culture in substantive and superficial ways. People who did not necessarily subscribe to the range of beliefs associated, rightly or wrongly, with people who looked "like that" began to dress like hippies. Advertisers had been fast to recognize a vast market in the burgeoning youth culture; they also cashed in on it, using the accoutrements of the counterculture to reach a wider market, which, in turn, diluted the messages of the counterculture. Underground newspapers stepped back a bit from the confrontational rhetoric and flaunting of illegal activities

¹⁴¹Ibid., 17 June 1967.

¹⁴²Ibid., 17-31 January 1968.

¹⁴³Ibid., 3-15 February 1968.

¹⁴⁴Arnold interviews 1-2.

that had made them so objectionable to so many people in their early days.

If, in general, countercultural fashions and ideas were gaining more acceptance--or at least tolerance--in Dallas Burns continued to have problems with the legally constituted authorities. The year 1970 was not a good one for Burns. Even though it began with what he called his "favorite" bust, the arrest for the sexual cartoon in January, it was still one more arrest to deal with.¹⁴⁵ In February 1970, Baker returned from California.¹⁴⁶ He had paid off his debt and was ready to return to SMU to finish his degree. No longer under financial obligation to his father, who by then no longer worked for Murchison anyway, Baker felt free to rejoin Burns in editing Notes.¹⁴⁷ In March there was a drug raid on the Notes house.¹⁴⁸ And in April, Burns faced his most serious arrest to date. He and Baker went to Lee Park to sell newspapers. It was a fine spring day, and people began skinny-dipping in Turtle Creek. Before the day was over, Burns had been arrested for "interfering with police officers during a civil disturbance," a felony offense.¹⁴⁹ A Dallas Morning News

¹⁴⁵McEnteer, Fighting Words, 163.

¹⁴⁶Poulos, "Iconoclast," 3, cited in Wells, "Iconoclast," 28.

¹⁴⁷Baker interviews 1-2.

¹⁴⁸McEnteer, Fighting Words, 163-164.

¹⁴⁹Dallas Morning News, 14 April 1970.

story called participants in the incident "troublemakers," "riotous youths," "thug[s]" and "hoodlums," although the "police declined to call the episode a riot."¹⁵⁰

Besides Burns's legal problems, Notes experienced upheavals and staff dissension, which Dennis and Rivers found typical of underground newspapers after about 1970.¹⁵¹ Baker's return did not help matters. Burns had been running the show alone more than two years. He was no longer used to sharing power. In addition, Burns and Baker differed about the direction the paper should take, and Burns asked Baker to leave. "It was basically stylistic," Baker said. "Brent was into doing more sensational things, and the second thing was he did not want to do as complete coverage as I did. Also, Brent was not really up to giving me half, mainly because he had been put through so much personal suffering."¹⁵²

Disappointed, but philosophical, Baker agreed; however, he then founded a biweekly underground newspaper, Dallas News.¹⁵³ In Baker's mind, the papers were complementary. Between Burns and Baker, Dallas now had an alternative

¹⁵⁰Ibid., 13 April 1970.

¹⁵¹Dennis and Rivers, Other Voices, 139; and Wells, "Iconoclast," 28-33.

¹⁵²Baker interview, 11 December 1974, cited in Wells, "Iconoclast," 29.

¹⁵³Baker interview 1; and Baker interview, 11 December 1974, cited in Wells, "Iconoclast," 30.

newspaper every week; however, they were competitive in the sense that they were competing for the same advertising dollars.¹⁵⁴

In mid-September 1970, Burns left Notes, tired of his seemingly never-ending struggles with Dallas officialdom and tired of the responsibility of being the father figure to the communal group of people who lived in the big house on Live Oak Street and put out Notes.¹⁵⁵ He was tired, he was "freaked out" about being followed all the time,¹⁵⁶ and it just was not fun for him anymore, so he sold 999 shares of Notes to the Fort Worth White Panthers for the sum of one marijuana cigarette, which they then smoked to cement the deal. The White Panthers renamed the paper Hooka Notes, and later Hooka, reflecting its increased drug-culture orientation, but the paper soon dissolved under staff factionalism, that Movement bugaboo.¹⁵⁷ Although the paper, which was being run by a collective, existed for a few more issues, in essence Notes died when Burns left.¹⁵⁸ Baker said Notes "died the day Stoney Burns walked away from

¹⁵⁴Baker interview 1; McEnteer, Fighting Words, 166; and Wells, "Iconoclast," 30-31.

¹⁵⁵Stein interview, 25; and McEnteer, Fighting Words, 166

¹⁵⁶Seal, "Stoney Burns," 16.

¹⁵⁷Dallas News, 13-26 January 1971; and Wells, "Iconoclast," 31.

¹⁵⁸McEnteer, Fighting Words, 166-167; and Stein interview, 20-21.

3117 Live Oak and stopped publishing the paper."¹⁵⁹

Burns went to Austin to work on a start-up underground newspaper there, Lone Star Dispatch, but found its staff mired in even worse factionalism and with naive ideas about running a newspaper.¹⁶⁰ Within a month, he returned to Dallas and joined Baker at Dallas News, returning to the masthead identified as sports editor, a typical underground newspaper joke, since Dallas News did not cover sports.¹⁶¹ In reality, Burns was the art director, although he also sold advertising, wrote a gossip column, and did a little bit of everything,¹⁶² but "without having ultimate responsibility, which is what Doug had."¹⁶³

After several years away, J.D. Arnold also returned to the paper, this time as news editor, to help Baker in his desire to professionalize the paper. What that meant this time around was to make the paper more appealing to a broader group of people, more like a traditional newspaper, less threatening, such as not calling policemen "pigs" anymore.¹⁶⁴ They changed the paper's name to the

¹⁵⁹Dallas News, 13-26 January 1971; and Hooka (Dallas), 22 January 1971.

¹⁶⁰Seal, "Stoney Burns," 16; and Stein interview, 21.

¹⁶¹Dallas News, 24 March-14 April 1971; and Stein interview, 11.

¹⁶²McEnteer, Fighting Words, 168.

¹⁶³Stein interview, 24-25.

¹⁶⁴Arnold interview 1; and Baker interview 1.

Iconoclast. Three of the pioneers of Dallas underground journalism were back together again, "battle-scarred but irrepressible."¹⁶⁵ They would bring the Dallas alternative newspaper to a state of almost respectability. Although, technically speaking, Iconoclast was not the lineal descendant of Notes, it was its descendant in the sense that three of the original key figures as Notes were back together and that was how they chose to think of it.¹⁶⁶

They were doing something they loved, writing about things they believed in and felt strongly about. It was meaningful work, work that made a difference. Arnold said, "We felt that our contribution to the revolution could be in this citadel of blatant racism and conservatism. Maybe we weren't leading revolutions, but we were guerrilla warriors."¹⁶⁷ They were not doing it for the money, because they were not making any money--for ten years, they operated in the hole and lived on the edge.¹⁶⁸ Often Burns would get up in the morning and go check their post office box to see if any checks had come in the mail before he could go eat breakfast. As irreverent as they seemed at times, the paper was serious and meaningful to them, and they took their responsibilities seriously. Burns put the

¹⁶⁵McEnteer, Fighting Words, 169.

¹⁶⁶Arnold interview 2; and Baker interview 2.

¹⁶⁷Arnold interview 2.

¹⁶⁸Baker interview 1.

paper out when he was "down to stems and seed,"¹⁶⁹ Baker said. Like Baker had at SMU, Burns persevered in the face of even greater harassment during the years he published the paper.

Burns was no longer the publisher, but he was still associated with the paper, and he had one more arrest in his future. Within a month after announcing his candidacy for Dallas County sheriff in 1972, Burns was arrested for possession of a small amount of marijuana. Burns always maintained the marijuana was "planted" in retaliation for printing the photographs of undercover narcotics agents. Friends who were associated with him at the time believe him, pointing out that it was such a minuscule amount of marijuana--if he had known it was there, it would have been easy to get rid of it by eating it. Burns was sentenced to ten years and one day in prison, the one day to ensure he could not be paroled. Tired of all the hassles and awaiting the outcome of his appeal on the marijuana conviction, Burns quit the Iconoclast in 1973 and founded Buddy, a free, non-controversial, Texas-wide monthly music magazine named after his early hero, Texas rock 'n' roller Buddy Holly. In 1974, he was sent to the state prison at Huntsville, one of the last people sent up under Texas's draconian drug laws, which had been revamped but not retroactively. Governor Dolph

¹⁶⁹An expression meaning broke, referring being reduced to smoking the less desirable parts of the marijuana.

Briscoe commuted his sentence a month later.¹⁷⁰

Baker published the Iconoclast with a changing string of editors,¹⁷¹ finally closing shop in March 1977, ten years after he was instrumental in founding Dallas's first underground newspaper. The paper went from being turned down for membership in the Chamber of Commerce-sponsored media directory to being an active member of the Texas Press Association. It went from being "underground" to being merely "alternative," a designation underground newspapers were increasingly adopting as they began trying to appeal to a broader group of readers.

The Iconoclast, and newspapers like it across the United States, paved the way for the free, mass-circulation weekly alternative newspapers, like Dallas Observer, which most major cities have today, papers which are hardly "underground" but which owe much to their underground predecessors. In one-newspaper towns, which include most American cities and towns today, weekly alternative newspapers often provide the only alternative to the news and perspectives of the daily newspaper.¹⁷²

From a five-page Xeroxed letter-sized sheet that came

¹⁷⁰McEnteer, Fighting Words, 170-171, 173-177.

¹⁷¹Baker interviews, 6 September 1974; 11 December 1974, cited in Wells, "Iconoclast," 31-33.

¹⁷²David Armstrong, A Trumpet to Arms: Alternative Media in America, with a Foreword by Ben H. Bagdikian (Los Angeles: J. P. Tarcher, 1981) 276-279, 294-297.

out catch as catch can to a forty-plus-page weekly tabloid, Notes survived in its various incarnations for ten years, always operating at a deficit.¹⁷³ It began its life at SMU, an unlikely outpost for radical, or even liberal, ideas and progressed to being distributed at 7-11 convenience stores and at singles apartment complexes and having a circulation of 30,000. It wrote about the Dallas counterculture and news of interest to the counterculture, and in so doing, it both helped define Dallas's nebulous counterculture and helped create it. It brought to light of day opinions and voices that otherwise might not have been heard in Dallas. During the almost three years he served as editor and publisher of Notes, Stoney Burns was an affront to the Dallas Establishment. He represented the revolution and all the forces of anarchy and cultural chaos Dallas so greatly feared. In his tall, lanky, lion-maned form was the embodiment of everything Dallas city fathers feared and loathed about the counterculture. For three years, he called it as he saw it. Through Notes, he opposed the Vietnam war, attacked Dallas's entrenched racism, lampooned Dallas's sacred cows, attacked the Dallas powers-that-be, exposed official hypocrisy, and published articles and comics heavily laden with drugs and sexual content, a combination that offended Dallas's highly developed sense of decency.

¹⁷³Baker interview 1.

Because the newspaper Burns published gave an outlet to the many different voices that made up the variegated Dallas counterculture, Dallas held him personally responsible for unleashing the Sixties on the conservative, image-conscious city. He had to be stopped. And, as Burns wrote, "baby, they had the guns."¹⁷⁴

Baker called Notes a reflection of Burns and his personality. It was all that. It was also a reflection of the Dallas counterculture during its earliest, most tumultuous years.

¹⁷⁴Notes, 27 May 1967.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The years from 1967 to 1970 were the formative ones of a vibrant Dallas counterculture that flourished and then waned. For almost three years during that period, Stoney Burns edited and published Dallas Notes, then Dallas's longest-lasting underground newspaper. To mention the Sixties in Dallas is to invoke the memory of Stoney Burns. Was Stoney Burns the unifying figure of the Dallas counterculture during its formative years?

The answer to that question requires only to look at the nature of the Dallas counterculture. Like the national counterculture, it was an unruly, motley conglomeration of people with a varying degree of beliefs in common--and it was unquestionably not unified. The counterculture and "hippies"--those were convenient labels for society to describe people who were doing things outside the norm. The counterculture consisted of people who came to their rebellion against the homogeneity and strictures of modern American life from many different directions and for as many different reasons.

The cultural revolutionaries, the so-called "heads," sought a revolution in American lifestyles, and their lives,

which were lived outside of society's regimentation, reflected their beliefs. The political revolutionaries, the so-called "fists," after the clenched fists they raised as a symbol of revolution and defiance, wanted political action--ending the war in Vietnam and working for radical social change that would result in a more equitable society. They were not heavily involved with, and often were opposed to, the use of drugs and the "blissed out" behavior of the "heads." What the "heads" and the "fists" had in common was an absolute rejection of the way things were, and tied to that was an absolute belief in freedom. These two main threads of the counterculture intertwined, to a greater or lesser degree, along the way.

In Dallas, people who were considered part of the counterculture were variously active in the antiwar movement, the push for empowerment for minorities, Students for a Democratic Society, or, for some people, nothing more than "sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll." There was nothing unified about any of it, except in the uneasy minds of those in the mainstream culture the mostly young revolutionaries were countering. To mainstream America, the counterculture was one unified entity that seemed threatening because it challenged cherished American values and institutions.

Laurence Leamer contended in The Paper Revolutionaries: The Rise of the Underground Press that no structure could possibly contain all the diverse and contradictory elements

that made up the counterculture; only a medium--the underground press--encompassed those threads of "Marx, Freud, Zen, Artaud, Kesey, Lenin, Leary, Ginsberg, Che, Gandhi, Marcuse, Laing, Fidel and Lao Tzu...anarchy... Chairman Mao...rock" because only underground newspapers gave a voice to all those varied and contradictory impulses--to those angry about the war, to angry voices in the African-American community, to those who wanted to make the country's institutions more democratic, to those who wanted to drop out, and to those who opposed the country's marijuana laws. Leamer found the underground press was the counterculture's only "unifying institution."¹

Notes was a unifying force for the Dallas counterculture in the sense that it provided a central clearinghouse and voice for unpopular ideas. As its editor and publisher from November 1967 to September 1970, Burns was not a unifying figure in the sense that the Dallas counterculture was not and never could have been unified. He was, however, a unifying force in the sense that he was one readily recognizable figure closely identified with all these provocative new ideas because he provided an outlet for them, and both sides recognized him as such. As the person whose name was at the top of every issue's masthead, Burns was the one person the Dallas Establishment could

¹Laurence Leamer, The Paper Revolutionaries: The Rise of the Underground Press (New York: Simon and Scuster), 13.

point its collective finger to as being responsible for spreading dangerous, radical ideas in Dallas. Burns said, "I got more credit or more blame than I actually deserved. I was the messenger."² In the eyes of the Dallas Establishment, Burns was the Dallas counterculture--a living, breathing reminder of all the countercultural values that were so repugnant to them. If they shut down Notes and shut Burns up, the forces of the anti-Establishment in Dallas might die.

Burns was not a leader of the counterculture because there was no such thing, but the Dallas Establishment did not understand that. Doug D. Baker, Jr., said his parents thought Burns was leading him astray, and Burns's parents thought Baker was leading Burns astray, but "we were both doing what we wanted to do as free, in-command-of-our faculties young adults."³ The adults of the Dallas Establishment, like the parents of the two young underground newspaper editors, could not imagine young people coming up with all these un-American ideas on their own--someone else had to be responsible, and who was more likely to be responsible than the man who published and sold that smutty little rag of a newspaper? Burns therefore became a target

²Brent LaSalle Stein, interview by Bonnie Lovell (Dallas, Texas, 28 April 1998), University of North Texas Oral History Collection, OH 1241, (Denton, Texas: University of North Texas Oral History Program, 1998), 17, cited hereinafter as Stein interview.

³Doug D. Baker, Jr., interview by author, Alameda, California, 29 October 1998.

of Establishment outrage.

There were necessarily leaders of the various radical political factions--political movements and actions need leaders and organizers to make things happen, so there were leaders of the anti-war movement, leaders of the civil rights and Black Power movements, leaders of the student movement. But for the counterculture, the idea of a leader in the sense of a director was an absurdity. To think there could be a leader derives from a misunderstanding by most Americans of the nature of the counterculture. It looked scary to them--all of a sudden there were all these strangely dressed young people doing things and talking about things that would have been unheard of earlier in the decade. It was easy to believe someone must be directing it--just as they mistakenly believed Communism had one master director who threatened America.

If Burns, as the publisher of Notes, was not the leader of a decentralized counterculture in the sense of directing that counterculture, he was, however, a leader within the countercultural community and one of its most influential citizens. He stood up for freedom of the press when it would have been easier not to. Although political activists with rigid radical viewpoints, like Roy Barte Haile, Jr., dismissed Burns as being only "a newspaper publisher with long hair,"⁴ Burns played a leadership role in the

⁴Roy Barte Haile, Jr. Interview by author, 10 May 1999.

counterculture by publishing a community newspaper for three years during which he constantly was harassed and repeatedly arrested. He battled the courts successfully, and he continued to publish Notes. Burns's friend, musician Kenny Parsons, said Burns was not an Abbie Hoffman, but "he might have risen to the occasion."⁵ Burns did not lead--or even participate in--political demonstrations. "God, I would have loved to have been at the Mobilization Against the War and some of those big things. I never could. I had a newspaper I had to put out," Burns said.⁶ But putting out a newspaper that presented news about things like the Mobilization against the War demonstration in Washington, D.C., from a perspective not otherwise found in Dallas provided a useful service. And, when it was necessary, Burns rose to the occasion.

In the eyes of Dallas "freaks," Burns was the Dallas counterculture, too. He was the one person in Dallas anyone in the counterculture might be likely to associate with holding the same views, wherever they happened to fall within the spectrum of ideas associated with the counterculture, simply because he provided a forum for those unpopular ideas. To those on both sides, Burns was a symbol of the counterculture. Symbols, moreover, can be powerful

⁵Mark Seal, "Stoney Burns: Alive and Living Well in Dallas," Dallas Life magazine, Dallas Morning News, 2 January 1983, 7.

⁶Stein interview, 17-18.

unifying forces.

Burns and Notes, furthermore, played an important role in the development of the Dallas counterculture. The seeds were there, but to come to full maturity a counterculture needs its own institutions and businesses, as was somewhat the case in San Francisco. With their own newspaper, Dallas hippies could find out about local events of interest-- demonstrations, love-ins, concerts--and could support the businesses that advertised in Notes and catered to the hip community. Notes contributed to a growing sense of community by disseminating information not found in other sources. The existence of Notes made it a little easier for those who came along later to be "freaks," to look different, to dress funny, to believe in peace and love and non-violence and freedom. Burns said one of Notes's lasting contributions was that "maybe it helped loosen things up a bit."⁷

Besides being a powerful symbol to the counterculture, Burns was also a bit of a hero--or martyr--as news of his arrests spread through the ranks of Dallas hippiedom. There was perhaps a feeling that, "Well, he got busted, and he's fighting it, and he's doing it in place of me or for me." Maybe hippies believed Burns was taking the heat for everyone who smoked dope and had long hair and believed the things he did, but who were less likely to be apprehended

⁷Stein interview, 20.

because they were less visible. It might be possible for a Dallas hippie to live more or less discreetly and therefore unbothered--but not one who published and sold a newspaper that openly and outrageously said all the things Notes said.

Burns was not the unifying figure in a Dallas counterculture that did not have a single unifying figure. Notes, the newspaper he published, was, however, a unifying institution that provided a voice to unrelated elements in the counterculture and created a sense of community. Burns was not a leader of the Dallas counterculture in the sense of governing its direction; however, he was a leader within the community. He published its newspaper--and against considerable odds. Burns was a symbol--of something that was wrong in Dallas and America to the Establishment, and of the potential for radical change to the counterculture. As a symbol, he was a unifying force. Burns was a lightning rod for the attacks of the Establishment and a beacon for the hippies.

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