

DISCussions

By Gregory Hall

"Crosby, Stills, and Nash in concert at the Tower Theatre," I heard on the radio, as I drove home the other day. I had to smile. Could the spirit that capped off the restless yet dogmatic sixties be regenerated? Reunited, would those three men with their magic voices and soaring counterpoint evoke the life-drama of Woodstock, or would they recall a sentimental if not nostalgic glimpse of this generation's past? Possibly they could make us see what we, as well as the new legions of Kiss and Aerosmith fans, have lost, as we approach the end of the seventies.

My mind wandered back to the music on the radio. I knew immediately the song being played, the classic oldie "Roll Over Beethoven," but could not place the artist of this version. "What strange synthesizer technique they use," was my first reaction to the persistent noise running through the song's two-odd minutes. "Must have something to do with Eno," I thought, until it occurred to me I was listening to the Beatles.

I then realized that foreign, unfamiliar sound was actually thousands upon thousands of hysterical teenage voices screaming in unison. The music was rendered almost inaudible at parts, but then maybe it was not the music that mattered—the disc jockey broke into my thoughts by announcing that "Roll Over Beethoven" was a selection from the "new" Beatles album, recorded at concerts during American tours in '64 and '65.

Thousands of kids—thousands of females who would never act that way in public, and equal numbers of jealous males who tried to act disgusted, but were possessed by temptations to scream along—all came to those few concerts to welcome the four lads from Liverpool. Yesterday seems so far away.

There never again was a group we welcomed as we did the Beatles. It seems we never could forgive the Monkees for being manufactured prototypes. No mass-identity could be found in the bad-boy image of the Rolling Stones, although they helped relieve suppressed youthful fantasies. Today, the Stones linger as modern archetypes of the aging rock n' roller, and today's teens are weened on Frampton and the Bay City Rollers. Frampton, before his recent "discovery," had been around and been ignored for years. Compared to the Beatles, the Bay City Rollers command the young audience's hysterical response, but have absolutely nothing to justify that response. No talent, nothing original—just glossy predigested and animated pop.

For those having lived through Beatlemania and Woodstock, a rock concert today is a rather strange experience. Average concert audiences are passive and merely courteous—a song is played, the mass applauds politely with assorted catcalls and whistles. On stage, occasional audience participation and response is calculated by the performer, and usually happens on schedule. Concerts may be passed off as one form of apathetic escapism bred by the seventies: the concert-goer pays admission, gets high, and departs humming a favorite tune. Gone is the spontaneity: the excitement is manufactured, and travels from city to city, year after year. Supply and demand runs a vicious cycle, said Aldous Huxley of his *Brave New World*.

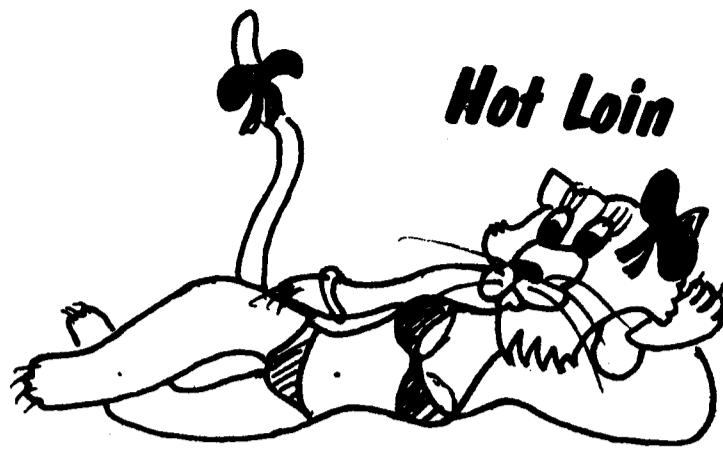
Mainstream rock music has degenerated into something as calculable as a mathematical formula—the equation as it has evolved could not have been foreseen by a young, naive Lennon and McCartney. Ambitious people envisioned dollar signs, saw that set equation as providing an absolute answer to financial problems of the entertainment industry, of

infant record companies, and as a bolster to the GNP. Rock n' Roll manifested itself as an untapped commercial commodity, and resulting exploitation breed consumerism like a cancer. The product of four English kids who had captured the public spirit could easily be converted into big business.

Massive talent hunts ensued, contracts were drawn, and the industry swelled and prospered from insatiable demand. Thousands of guitar-playing commodities were given their chance in the spotlight; but by comparison only a handful remained more than a few years. At the beginning of this decade, the Beatles folded under the pressure of their myth and their monster. Kids growing up in the seventies will never fully comprehend the cultural phenomenon, the excitement, or what happened to it.

The Beatles At The Hollywood Bowl is not an album of music as much as it is an historical document. Rock has become malignant, an artificially-induced need to be fulfilled, a product of advertising and promotion. Music is such an important factor in a young person's lifestyle that no one even bothered to complain much when record companies recently began demanding a dollar more for each sure-hit album released—if the consumer wants the product bad enough, they will pay however much it costs. Again, the evils of supply and demand.

We no longer have one chance in a lifetime to see our favorite performers, as was the case in the mid-sixties. Rock is ever-present and saturates the market...it has become an anesthetic. "Yesterday, all my troubles seemed so far away," the Beatles sang to us; but today, no matter where we turn, our trouble surrounds and confronts us. Maybe we no longer can scream out loud, maybe the seventies have conditioned us, or maybe there just is no reason to scream.



May 26
 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. - Father Richardson for Counseling Vendorville
 11:00 a.m. - Brown Bag Lunch - Returning Women - W-138
 12:15 p.m. - Simulated "Capitol Press Conference" with guest speaker and Prof. Heindel's classes - Auditorium and 216

May 28 - May 30
 Raft and Camping Trip to the Cheat River - Outdoor Club

May 30
 Holiday - No Classes

June 1
 12:00 noon - Meeting - Maranatha Bible Club
 8:00 p.m. - Meeting - SGA - Rm. 216

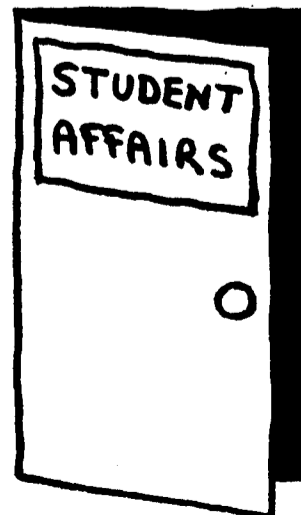
June 2
 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. - Father Richardson for Counseling - Vendorville
 11:00 a.m. - Brown Bag Lunch - Returning Women - Rm. W-138



The American League Softball champs.



We won't get really gross with this one.



"I'D LIKE TO SIGN-UP FOR AN AFFAIR, PLEASE!"