

A sociological approach to- The Rock Boom

By ELLIOT GOLB

Do you remember what happened when Frank Sinatra's swooning voice struck the ears of all those teenage girls of yesterday? At the first note from his voice; or was it before he sang, but when he came on stage; or was it even before he came on stage, but when everyone knew he'd be on stage in another minute or two, because that's what the fanatic disc jockey said; that everyone freaked out? The girls, ranging from the ages of fifteen to twenty-five, proceeded to omit shrieking screams, that indicated their love and appreciation for their idol, after which they proceeded to faint, and I guess that must have resulted from the shock of actually seeing their idol. Frank Sinatra emerged in the early 40's. A decade later, came Elvis Presley, and a decade after that came the Beatles. Screaming history had repeated itself, and the forecast calls for another repetition in the near future.

There weren't many guys at those concerts, because most guys only liked the musicians' music, and didn't want a bunch of girls fainting

all over them. Most guys didn't want to see Elvis swing his hips, or see Paul give a wink, or see Frank open his heart to them.

Not all the girls were fanatically taken, though. Some withdrew into their dreams of how great it would be to make love to one of their idols, or even marry one of them, and five happily everafter. For those of these girls, who had boyfriends, they did not want their boyfriends there, because if the guys saw how their girlfriends reacted, inhibited in their dreams as they were, they might become jealous; and there's no telling what they might do in the madness of their jealousy — they might even make a scene and drag their girlfriends out of the concert hall, and not even their girlfriends' tears would stop them. But I guess that wouldn't happen at Beatles' concerts, because there weren't any greasers at those concerts. The Beatles, were queers, with their long hair and that wasn't any place for a tough-minded, leather-jacketed, chain-swinging, bike-riding, greaser.

All great stars, sooner or later, stop playing to screaming audiences, because their inner musical souls cannot be satisfied, as long as they are playing to deaf ears — ears deafened by the sound of screams. Frank Sinatra stopped, Bing Crosby stopped, Eliv Presley stopped, Chuck Berry stopped, Xabian stopped, and the Beatles stopped.

All great stars stop

But then came the Monkees. The Monkees and their music are not worthy of remark; however, it is worthy to note that with the Monkees came a new phenomenon — the teeny-bopper. The Beatle fans, as the Beatles, had grown their primary stage of development in the 50's. It was just after the war, and business was just getting on its feet again, and a buck was hard-earned. The Monkees' fans had their primary growth take place in the Fabulous 60's as well, by which time the economy had become prosperous, and the buck came a lot easier, and was more plentiful. The youth of the 60's were becoming rich and spoiled, because their parents wanted them to have everything that they didn't have.

The corporate enterpriser of the time decided to re-create the Beatles, in the Monkees, because a fad was needed to soak the spend-crazy youth of their money. The

younger youth of the time had never experienced Beatlemania before, as his older peer had; so while he was busy experiencing Beatlemania all over again, his older peer, who had outgrown the screaming as the Beatles had, was busy buying more sophisticated studio produced recordings by the Beatles, and the Who, and Frank Zappa, and the Jefferson Airplane, and Bob Dylan. The younger youth, the teeny-bopper was only familiar with what AM radio told him to be familiar with. The older youth was reading Rolling Stone magazine, while the younger youth was reading Sixteen, and gazing at all the pin-ups of Davy Jones. The older youth was a step ahead of the younger youth. The older youth was dressing differently, and his hair was longer, and he was smoking dope too; the older youth was into different things, and it was only natural that the teeny-bopper would want to imitate his older peer. This would put off the older youth, who didn't want anything to do with his younger peer.

Older people

It should be noted here, that although I refer to the teeny-bopper as being the younger youth, there are also many older youth who belong to the teeny-bopper category. They were the older youth who did not become involved with Beatlemania, and the revolution it brought; which may have been because they were not far-sighted enough, or radical enough, or daring enough, to believe in the revolution, so they took advantage of the last chance, as well, with the Monkees; possibly because that movement was more innocent and in harmony more with the commercialistic, capitalistic regime of their parents, where there was no chance they would be termed subversive.

We have two cultures of youth today. They grew up together, in the same schools, and in the same families, and their chronological ages are similar. This phenomenon can be compared with the 50's, where, out of the average, normal teenager of the day, grew the beatnik and the bohemian. Then the teeny-bopper was an average, normal teenager; but today, no one wants to admit that they are teeny-boppers.

"I'm going on down to Yagurs' farm

I'm going to join in a rock'n'roll band

I'm going to camp out on the land
Then can I walk beside you
I have come here to lose the smog
And I feel to be a cog in something turning

By the time we got to Woodstock
We were half a million strong
And everywhere there was song
and celebration

And I dreamed I saw the bombers
Riding shotgun in the sky
And they were turning into butterflies."

Woodstock was the first

There was tranquility and togetherness at Woodstock. It was the first major recognized pop festival. There were no teeny-boppers there. A great part of the beauty of Woodstock lay in its spontaneity. The rain chant, to stop the coming of the rain, was spontaneous. Sliding in the mud, and having fun was spontaneous. Taking off one's clothes, and washing in the lake, to get all the mud off, was spontaneous, and revolutionary, to have taken place in a public arena. The expressions used by the organizers, over the broadcasting system to keep the situation cool, were innovative, and gained vast usage and popularity, after Woodstock: "Can you dig it? — Keep it cool — Really neat, really neat".

Then many rock promoters saw that money could be made from a pop festival, and that the many who missed Woodstock, wanted to create their own spontaneous beauty, all over again, and the capitalistic, rip-off, business enterpriser was very obliging. But spontaneity cannot be created, because it is something that is natural and self-generating. And so the beauty of the pop festival vanished. The majority of pop festival goers were teeny-boppers, who wanted a second chance, and straights and greasers who had heard of the immorality of hippy chicks, and were curious as to what it was all about, and they thought they might even get some action for themselves.

Pop festivals became violent, unruly, unorganized arenas. They tried so hard to imitate Woodstock with its rain chant, when there was no rain; with its dope for sale signs; and with its gate-crashing. Toronto pop festivals were like that, and I assume that other North American festivals were like that too. The

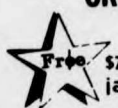


Elvis Presley can really rip into a crowd — hips and all.



Hundreds of Poplin, Nylon, Leather, Melton, Corduroy, Jackets, Slopp® & Sweat & T-Shirts

CRESTED POPLIN JACKETS \$12.95



\$7.50 Chenille School Crest with every jacket order of \$25.00 and over.

CRESTING WHILE U-WAIT

Canadian Novelty Shirt & Sportswear Co.

2462 Yonge Street Telephone 486-0997 486-0999

629 SPADINA AVE.

(1 block south of Bloor)

or PHONE: 921-3500

RING is holding a

clearance sale of **ROBERTS**

tape recorders. Prices (while they last)

771X Recorder	\$275.00	450A Deck	\$175.00
(Auto-reverse)		650XD Deck	\$315.00
800X Recorder	\$375.00	5050X Recorder	\$625.00
5050X Recorder	\$625.00	5050XD Deck	\$565.00
Receiver Model 50	\$150.00		