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## Practical Spiritualities in a Media Age

Edited by  
Curtis D. Coats and Monica M. Emerich

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the group—both in the desire to connect with each other, which is not evidenced in second-order discourse or articulation, and in the temptation to resort to enunciation in order to capture the dangerous flow of desire that can be liberated by experiencing the work of art. Only when those flows of desire are liberated from the second-order level of discourse, when the participants become other-than-gender, other-than-human, and most importantly other-than-self, do they describe a feeling of connection or wholeness, both with other members of the group and, significantly, with their own theological perceptions of God.

## 7

## “Dancing Our Prayers”: Material Culture and Practical Spiritualities of the Jam Band Scene\*

Lucas F. Johnston  
Wake Forest University

Miracles are a regular occurrence in the jam band scene. The term “miracles” is widely used to refer to what some perceive as incredibly fortuitous circumstances—which these people often describe in terms of the intervention of cosmic or supernatural forces that manifest their deepest desires. It is not unusual to see dozens and sometimes hundreds of people (depending on the show) outside performance venues with a finger in the air asking “who’s got my miracle?”—and what they mean by miracle is “extra ticket.” An example will be illustrative. One jam band enthusiast described his miracle this way:

We all had tickets except Max. He couldn’t find shit in the lot. I was coming down off a great acid trip and was in a super, skippy mood. So, in my homemade tie-dye I walked the lot with a finger in the air offering cash. After missing out for a while, I changed my tune to needing a miracle for my birthday show (it was not my birthday—it [had been] a couple of weeks later). After only a few short moments, a hottie came up hugged me, kissed my mouth, told me happy birthday and gave me a free ticket. It was up in the high seats, but Max was in. I felt a little bad for the birthday thing, but hey—a lion’s gotta eat. Max had to suffer the Karma bite. Some hippie puddled his palm with some good liquid and he tripped his fucking face off so hard by himself that he had to leave [the] show early. When I got out, he talked me into driving him home . . . through the night. So I guess karma bit me too.<sup>1</sup>

This was a miracle, if not of biblical proportions, at least significant for a couple of people at the time. That religious terms are used to describe such moments of convergence is no accident, but instead reflects the ways in which

people manufacture meaning through the appropriation of religious symbols, metaphors, and tropes to navigate the worlds they find themselves thrown into. Increasingly, such meaning-making occurs outside the boundaries of what we might consider traditional religious structures. Focusing specifically on participants in improvisational rock music subcultures, I highlight the historical tributaries to these movements and the ways in which various media shape and help to broadcast alternative, improvisational spiritualities.

Performance-oriented subcultures offer a provocative case that illustrates the ways in which alternative cultural mores have flourished and spread and that also highlights some of the shortcomings that have hampered the scholarly analysis of practical forms of religious meaning-making. In what follows I consider people who self-identify as “spiritual but not religious” to be engaging in religious meaning-making. If we define religion broadly—as related to both ordinary and extraordinary experiences and the ways in which people embody their values in everyday life—then these subcultures and the forms of cultural production in which they engage are certainly religious.<sup>2</sup> Such spiritualities, which often contain green if not dark green themes, are becoming more common and socially impactful. But questions remain as to whether they will continue to grow in size and efficacy or whether they will, like some of their precursor movements in the late 1960s in the United States, fade away.

Such social movements can be fruitfully analyzed by considering modes of cultural transmission first recognized by the philosopher Colin Campbell in his influential arguments about the cultic milieu, which he characterized as a system of countercultural social movements that seem to rather freely exchange metaphors and tropes, although the core values of these groups, and their ultimate aims, may differ significantly.<sup>3</sup> Later work extended this argument to environmentalist<sup>4</sup> and sustainability milieus<sup>5</sup> specifically tracing the ways in which such motivational metaphors and tropes were exchanged between grassroots and international organizations, countercultural and mainstream groups, and between religious and secular movements. At play within the performance-oriented subcultures I examine here a similar sort of exchange, though I will focus on material culture, the pragmatic and situational spiritualities that underlie these expressions, and the ways in which they express core values of these constituencies. In important ways the religious expressions I will explore and analyze illustrate a concern for performance and embodiment that nuance if not challenge some frequently exercised definitions of religions.

For instance, many scholars have argued that worldviews—that is, ideas about religious belonging and the tenets of specific religious groups—guide real-world

behaviors.<sup>6</sup> If people change their minds about their worldviews, so this reasoning goes, their behaviors might follow.<sup>7</sup> My ethnographic work and historical analysis of performance-oriented subcultures says otherwise: interpersonal interactions, and specific behaviors and practices, exercise significant influence on the shape of worldviews, not the other way round. Moreover, a “worldviews” approach misses the ways in which such practices are enshrined—and re-broadcast in various media—overturning conventional artistic sensibilities in a fusion of folk art and “high” art to project specific spiritual values into the public sphere. Music festivals provide a good example. Attending the now ubiquitous jam festivals is both expensive and requires significant preparation and effort.<sup>8</sup> Often a physical pilgrimage is required, and the travel and anticipated musical events become a central focus of social media communication that begins months prior to the event itself. In interviews and surveys and through social media, participants consistently refer to these experiences as formative for values that are articulated in terms of interdependence or fellow-feeling and as generative of spiritual well-being. Experience, then, can prime individuals to be receptive to certain facets of particular worldviews, but, in such cases, worldviews are often derivative of embodied, affective experiences of belonging and participation. Often participants indicate that these infrequent but highly affective experiences sustain them until the next big happening. In this analysis I focus specifically on the religious dimensions of these movements as revealed in both material culture (popular forms of ritual engagement evident in performance venues), and media dissemination, noting how they shape and express varied spiritualities. It may be helpful to offer some historical background about the emergence of improvisational rock music subcultures, to provide a better understanding of what material practices characterize this milieu and how these shape and express varied religious practices and identities.

### The genesis and rising popularity of improvisational rock music subcultures

As 1965 drew to a close, the critically acclaimed author Ken Kesey and his friends (referred to as the Merry Pranksters) held the first Acid Test in Soquel, California, a multi-media event fueled by still-legal LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide), a powerful entheogen.<sup>9</sup> Although not a concert in the usual sense, the Warlocks, a band which shortly thereafter renamed themselves the Grateful Dead, performed there, and their music was significantly impacted by the countercultural ethos



and performance sensibilities of this and later Acid Tests. The Pranksters' Acid Tests were designed to push the boundaries of both individual and collective exploration beyond the burgeoning hippie movement, to help people recognize and challenge the presuppositions behind their everyday perceptions, and to experiment with ostensibly more authentic, embodied forms of community. The spiritual sensibilities of this countercultural scene were more performative than intellectual or rational, influenced by non-Abrahamic religious traditions, and they exhibited a normative concern for tightly knit community. For many, these were highly affective experiments in religious meaning-making, embodying alternative values based on public expression, community, and a critique of "straight" mainstream America.<sup>10</sup>

These trends arguably reach back to the post-World War II period when younger generations in particular began to exhibit strong distrust in traditional sources of economic, political, and religious authority.<sup>11</sup> Most of the social movements that the sociologists Charles Glock and Robert Bellah identified as exemplars of the "new consciousness" included a focus on alternative living arrangements or lifestyles.<sup>12</sup> These often included forms of spiritually grounded practice such as meditation, vegetarianism, and pacifism. These practices could be imagined as micro-level enactments of the public discontent evidenced in public image events<sup>13</sup> such as the 1967 Human Be-In, the 1967 demonstrations against Army recruiting in Berkeley, arson attacks on Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) buildings and other buildings in the San Francisco Bay Area (1968), and the occupation of Alcatraz by members of the American Indian Movement (AIM) and their allies (1969–71). Such countercultures were often inspired by the valorization of Eastern philosophies and religions (especially Buddhism and Daoism) or of indigenous lifeways and practices. These political and religious trends converged as expressions of this new consciousness, the era of radical politics that emerged in the United States in the 1960s, but that had by the 1970s largely lost its political teeth. Although it has been argued that there were important divergences among the more politically concerned Berkeley New Left,<sup>14</sup> the socially focused San Francisco hippie movements, and the perhaps even more radical Acid Test counterculture, each of these contributed to the cultic milieu a rejection of traditional political, social, and religious norms and helped translate into improvisational rock subcultures forms of cultural expression that included a concern for communalism, psychedelic experimentation, and an experience-based spiritual sensibility.

The Grateful Dead epitomized the experimental ethos of this period, along with other bands such as Santana, Jefferson Airplane, Hot Tuna, and Big Brother and the Holding Company. Characteristic of this growing scene was

an emphasis on live musical experimentation, including unpredictable set lists and unstructured jamming, which often developed into songs that were much longer than the typical three-minute forms that were popular at that time. The Great Human Be-In in San Francisco included many of the most influential San Francisco bands as well as notable writers of the Beat generation such as Allen Ginsberg and Louis Ferlinghetti and figures such as former Harvard professors Timothy Leary and Richard Alpert who were themselves engineering psychedelic experiments on the East Coast.<sup>15</sup> The title of the event, reminiscent of the sit-ins that were formative for the US civil rights movement, hinted at the contemplative and experimental habitat created there. Drawing on strategies pioneered by the Pranksters, who had advertised their Acid Tests with wildly experimental poster art, the Human Be-In poster was reflective of much of this cultic milieu's admiration for indigenous and Eastern philosophies and metaphysics, invoking American Indian images and advertising that the Buddha would be among the attendees. The Grateful Dead and other related improvisational rock acts popularized the psychedelic rock poster, which became a crucial piece of the material culture of improvisational rock scenes.

These countercultural movements were engineering new forms of expression that paralleled their new ways of being-in-the-world—they were practical spiritualities manufactured in a rich *bricolage* of cultural elements including experimentation with entheogens, and indigenous, Eastern, and other sets of values, which provided some anchor in an era characterized by what some perceived to be an evacuation of meaningful forms of interpersonal engagement. In some respects, such perceptions of disconnectedness were motivated by the rise of suburban consumer culture in the postwar period as well as from the supposed secularization of American culture. America was in a liminal phase, between the unifying values that buttressed the Allies during World War II, and the hyper-individualism that characterized the postwar period. The countercultures under analysis here were not only participants in this transitional phase of American culture, but also intentionally manufactured liminal modes of being that rejected the still emerging postmodern social structures and the firmly entrenched military-industrial system of the second half of the twentieth century.

### Liminoid cultures and secularization

Liminal states were characterized by the anthropologist Victor Turner as initiating a "subjunctive mood," one in which participants "express desires, hypotheses,

suppositions, [and] possibilities”—they engage in performing the world-as-it-could be.<sup>16</sup> This state can be dangerous, overturning certain social conventions and understandings. But this uncertain state is also capable of generating a sense of *communitas*, a relatively undifferentiated group that experiences through this erasure of structure a sense of effervescence.<sup>17</sup> These terms, however, were used by Turner to describe highly ritualized lifeways that were typically observed among smaller, more ethnically and ethically homogenous groups.

In contrast, the postmodern cultures in which improvisational rock subcultures came of age were more heterogeneous, characterized by divergent ethical perspectives, differing cultural backgrounds, as well as by radical socioeconomic disparities. Turner viewed such cultures as “liminoid,” places where liminality was no longer expressed in social rites of passage or ritual forms but instead sought by participants through recreational or other pursuits that allowed them to divest from the structured modes of culture that characterized modern and postmodern capitalist societies or at least to engage in performances “as though” they were removed from them. Importantly, hybrid spiritualities, cobbled together from multiple sources and largely customizable, grew in popularity in this milieu, with participants eschewing what they perceived as empty rituals and hierarchical structures. Ritualization did not disappear but rather took on new contextual forms. Many individuals have preconcert rituals—or believe that specific drugs should be ingested at particular places or types of events—and some friend-groups that gather at concerts and festivals fashion large flags or other symbols, which are raised over camping or parking areas prior to shows. In most cases such rituals involve much improvisation if not spontaneity, and provide cognitive anchors that hold fast threads of memory from these highly affective events. These are contextual and embodied practices, rather than the intellectualized or rationalized theologies that scene participants often reject.

Events such as the Human Be-In, the Monterrey Pop Music Festival (1967), and Woodstock (1969) became the quintessential exemplars of this modern manifestation of *communitas*, where people performed new modes of religious meaning-making and later recalled these moments as spiritually formative events. To illustrate, at Woodstock an Asian Indian guru named Swami Satchidananda gave the opening prayer and referred to music as the “the celestial sound that controls the whole universe.”<sup>18</sup> He encouraged the gathered youth to promote a spiritual awakening for the good of the world: “America is becoming whole. America is helping everybody in the material field, but the time has come for America to help the whole world with

spirituality also.”<sup>19</sup> The group yoga sessions at the festival were also unique sites of spiritual improvisation, with the teacher (unnamed in the film) comparing Kundalini yoga to the “same energy that drugs give you . . . [It’s] the same channels, only drugs do it *for* you and this way you can do it yourself . . . I learned it in Los Angeles. It would be groovy to experiment with it, like these guys who’ve been experimenting with it for at least 6,000 years, and getting very high behind it.”<sup>20</sup> The teacher later compared the sensations that could be cultivated through proper yoga practice with what happened when he smoked DMT.<sup>21</sup> Yoga, in this interpretation, is a spiritual practice for achieving altered states, parallel to the ritualized intake of strongly entheogenic compounds. At one point during Woodstock, a large-scale neotribal chant and drumming ritual commenced as a storm descended on the concert-grounds, including improvised drumming with instruments such as sticks and empty beer cans.<sup>22</sup> These illustrate the sort of spiritual *briocolage* that characterized these milieus, but Woodstock is merely one pivotal illustration of a transitional cultural moment when, as the festival organizer Michael Lang said, the youth were moving away from the “previous generation,” and it was possible to see what the younger generation does “on their own, without cops, without guns, without clothes, without hassles. Everybody pulls together, everybody helps each other, and it works.”<sup>23</sup>

Interestingly, the form of Kundalini the Woodstock yogi employed included instructions that led the practitioners to hyperventilate, a practice that is now common in forms of New Age ritualization such as holotropic breathwork.<sup>24,25</sup> Yoga remains a common practice across North America and is frequently included as a free event at contemporary rock festivals. Pagan and neotribal practices such as ecstatic and group drumming, fire spinning, and face painting are increasingly commonplace and many, particularly at festival scenes, are reminiscent of this countercultural foment in the late 1960s. One common cultural narrative supposes that these hybrid spiritual practices emerged during this time as a result of an increasing secularization. Two things are clear, however: green religious practices have much deeper roots that reach back before the onset of secularization,<sup>26</sup> and syncretism—the combination and recombination of religious dimensions of human life (from food customs to dress to doctrine)—has been the rule rather than the exception.<sup>27</sup> The developments in the late 1960s, however, were colored by the unique cultural upheavals of that time. Let us turn back now to that pivotal phase to illustrate some of the ways in which these hybrid spiritualities were disseminated in various media through popular culture.

## The material culture of the improvisational rock milieu and the failure of progressivism

Important popular works, both literary and artistic (e.g., the poster art of these scenes), were expressions of what had become, for those who participated in it, new spiritualities that better fit the rapidly and radically changing cultural circumstances of the 1960s and early 1970s. Some examples of how such themes and tropes manifested in the material culture of these movements will be illustrative here.

The Grateful Dead archivist at the University of California, Santa Cruz, Nicholas Meriweather, wrote that “For the Dead, the Tests showed how an artistic event could be a transformative community ritual, a sensory alembic that could redefine the idea of performance by making everyone an artist of the experience. The audience became participants, participants became co-creators, and everyone left transformed.”<sup>28</sup> If he is right, then the art that accompanied these events was more than mere visual representation. It was, rather, first, an expression of an upcoming moment of *communitas* and, thereafter, a cognitive trigger for a highly affective experience of fellow-feeling and meaning-making. Many of the artists who created official show posters for the Grateful Dead and other bands from the burgeoning psychedelic music scene on the West Coast embodied these new modes of art. For instance, artist Lee Conklin was well known for amazingly intricate, fluid images where faces, creatures, and other images were embedded within the larger, more obvious portraits. His art, according to Meriweather, suggested “boundaries between forms could blur just as the limits of ego could dissolve under psychedelics.”<sup>29</sup> Psychedelic art celebrated some of the key elements of the new practices of this scene, by attempting to capture some of the visual experiences of entheogenic states by implying a sense of interconnectedness and invoking religious imagery.

Well-known artist Bob Fried noted that he designed his posters to convey a sense of “dimensional space. . . a kind of space network, rushing, floating . . . through time . . . the sense of discovery that I myself was experiencing [under the influence of entheogens].”<sup>30</sup> Some of artist David Singer’s most important works likewise projected a sense of pilgrimage. His posters for the final Fillmore West series (1970) shows featuring the Grateful Dead, Taj Mahal, and Bigfoot depicted two prominent mushrooms framed by a series of receding arches. There are steps leading up to the arches and, within them, behind the mushrooms in the foreground, contributing to the sense of journey, a picture of deep space lit by a nebula. Running up the cap of one of the mushrooms is a silver, cosmic

hominid creature. Meriweather elaborated that the poster was a “depiction of the loneliness of the human journey in the cosmos,” and, as he noted, “it is hard not to see in it something of a parable for the Dead’s own journey, as they navigated the end of the sixties.”<sup>31</sup> As with the music, the material culture of these improvisational rock scenes was intended to mimic the intrepidity, the danger, and sometimes even the solitude of the psychedelic journey. Psychonauts in the scene typically imbibed entheogens with friends and fellow concert-goers, but the psychedelic experience was also always an intensely personal experience variously characterized by feelings of unease, isolation, empowerment, a sense of belongingness, and sometimes even feelings of deep interconnection and fellow-feeling. These new experiential and highly participatory art forms had birthed a new consciousness widespread among these subcultures: a great hopefulness and a desire to restore, or better yet, to recapture a sense of the American Dream. But the dream lost steam and revolutionary sensibilities and community experiments did not move into the mainstream.

The sociologists Charles Glock and Robert Bellah, along with doctoral students from the University of California at Berkeley and the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, launched a research program that explored various manifestations of this new consciousness, which emerged in the 1960s.<sup>32</sup> Although the countercultural milieu that drove the radical movements—from violent anti-war and racial equality movements to psychedelic experimentations paired with improvisational rock music (that had by the late 1960s grown far beyond the Grateful Dead)—had lost its political traction by 1970, the strong focus on alternative lifestyles articulated within these subcultures persisted.<sup>33</sup> Such countercultures were characterized by a rich hybridization of cultural elements from indigenous lifeways and Eastern philosophies and religions (especially Buddhism and Daoism), which were ostensibly both more holistic in orientation and more environmentally friendly in prescriptions. In other words, while the possibility of political revolution seemed to have dissipated, countercultural emphases on communalism and a new spirituality continued to evolve if not flourish.

The material culture of contemporary improvisational rock subcultures still exhibits similar themes and performs many of the same functions. Popular and scholarly interest in Asian cultures and attendant philosophies and religions had percolated in the cultural background since the late 1800s, as anthropologists and linguists explored these through scholarly lenses. But interest in the East flourished in the 1950s as Beat authors discovered the work of such authors as D. T. Suzuki and as books such as Jack Kerouac’s *The Dharma Bums* (2006 [1958]) became

more popular. Gary Snyder, the real-life referent for Japhy Ryder, the protagonist of *The Dharma Bums*, wrote his Pulitzer Prize-winning *Turtle Island* in 1974 and was a frequent participant in the subcultures that popularized improvisational rock music; he was a purveyor of both indigenous and Buddhist philosophies and religions. Similar to the case with Asian traditions and cultures, indigenous North American cultures were also popularly imagined as offering holistic, alternative ethical foundations and spiritual orientations grounded in respect for nature. There continues to be a strong presence of imagery drawn from dharmic traditions and cultures (especially from Buddhism and Hinduism) as well as indigenous cultures. To illustrate, consider the recent triptych of posters by the artist Jeff Wood commemorating the 2013 Christmas Jam sponsored by Conscious Alliance and depicting what he refers to as a “neo-Tribal, Pagan Yule Priestess” summoning companion animals.<sup>34</sup> Although the main body of the portrait is a woman that is clearly Native American in appearance, the colors and style are distinctly psychedelic in form and color with fluid lines and boundaries. It clearly invokes dark green animistic themes<sup>35</sup> by depicting a theriomorphic being who summons the animals through the manipulation of elemental forces like fire.<sup>36</sup>

In addition, as it did among the Grateful Dead scene, fan art remains an important accompaniment to the mobile improvisational rock scene. For those unfamiliar with improvisational rock scenes, it is important to note that much of the cultivation of *communitas* occurs in parking lots and other areas near the venue before and after shows, sharing stories, music, fellowship, and making cottage industry purchases to take home as “relics” that remind participants of the spiritual happening. This material aspect of the spiritual community is most associated with the 1980s and 1990s Grateful Dead shows where it was not uncommon to find crowds upward of 300,000 people on stadium properties participating in a homemade “church” experience. Still today improvisational rock fans create artwork depicting favorite songs, lyrics, or other representations; embellish shirts, hats, pins, and posters with them; and sell them at live venues and online.<sup>37</sup> This small cottage industry—along with the sale of food, alcohol, and various drugs among these subcultures—generates a small but significant alternative economy based in both cash and trade.

Other experiential curiosities are also on display as in the case of the “rocket ship” available to brave travelers at the Lock’n Festival in 2014. Several women—dressed in garments both vaguely animistic (at least one of them wore an animal “tail”) and indigenously inspired—beckoned passersby to climb aboard the spacecraft for a trip “out of this world.” Those intrepid explorers that boarded the craft sat in a circle inside the ring of gongs (pictured), as the women, now the pilots



Figure 7.1 “Plastic Jesus.”

of the craft, pounded the gongs with varying ferocity to generate the vibratory and sonic impression of “blasting off.” In general, the festival grounds were arranged to provide a sense of both vacation and adventure, with guided hikes, mountain bike rentals, and various food vendors available throughout. The grounds provide a *liminoid* sensation, a temporary reprieve from the “real world,” though ironically they were oriented to maximize the consumer experience. Festival-goers are never far from concessions (both alcohol and food), though access to the quantity and quality of such goods is conspicuously on display in the physical segregation of the general admission, VIP, and Super-VIP constituencies.

At many festivals, where many if not most of the participants stay on the premises for several days, activities that reflect a concern for self-reliance and spiritual practices remain common. At one of the newer but still high-profile festivals, Lock’n Festival, there was a yoga session each morning. Although this was a free activity in this particular instance, outside the festival world it is largely practiced by middle- and upper-middle-class Americans, and it is a service for which they pay. Other organizations such as Backyard Revolution, a historical society that promotes self-sufficiency and the renewal of sustainable





Figure 7.2 "Blast Off."

living practices of early pioneer culture, also have large interactive displays and activities.<sup>38</sup> These organizations teach woodworking and demonstrate blacksmith skills, archery, canning, and other largely lost skills.

One interesting connection between the material culture of the Acid Tests and contemporary improvisational rock subcultures is the presence of the "Furthur" bus at several summer and fall festivals in 2014. This was the infamous rig that transported the Merry Pranksters through the Acid Tests of the late 1960s in their wide-ranging cultural experiments (Wolfe 1968),<sup>39</sup> painted in bright Day-Glo colors and fueled by speed and acid-heads. Long inoperable and stranded in Oregon, the bus was eventually restored by Ken Kesey's son Zane and made several festival appearances. Although taking pictures and walking on the bus is free, Zane also sells posters and t-shirts along with small, handpainted toy busses with psychedelic colors and other wares to support the bus's maintenance and transportation. The intense interest demonstrated by contemporary festival-goers in this relic, which according to some retains some spiritual significance, demonstrates both a knowledge of and endorsement of at least some foundational aspects of contemporary rock subcultures, including their countercultural roots and anti-authoritarian ethos.

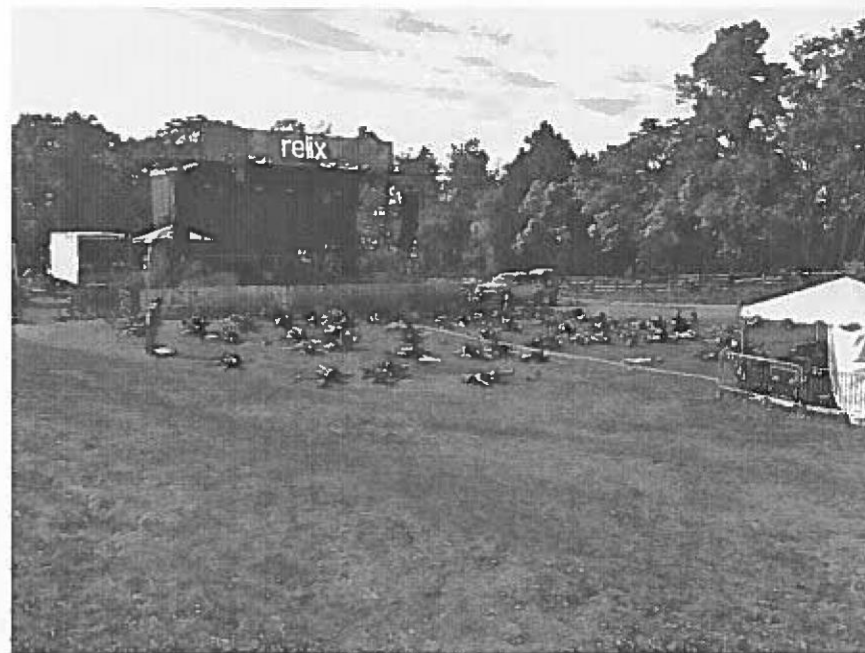


Figure 7.3 Yoga at Lock'n Festival 2014, Arrington, Virginia.

In short, the material culture of contemporary improvisational rock scenes invokes several of the key ideological and normative features of the late 1960s counterculture and psychedelic rock subcultures. First, much of the art of improvisational rock scenes continues to invoke indigenous and dharmic traditions, which were embraced as US youth searched for alternative sources of authority in the post-World War II period. Second, the material culture exhibits affinity with philosophies or practices, often spiritualized, that attempt to tap into another realm of experience or reality whether through the ingestion of entheogens (epitomized by the continuing popularity of the Furthur bus, which is emblematic of psychedelic experimentation) or which question received societal norms and values. The presence of local food vendors—even small-scale barter and cash economies outside of concert and festival venues—begin to indicate an interest in divesting from the dominant consumer paradigm, even if the capitalist, consumerist paradigm structures the whole experience in significant ways. Nonetheless, people still find within these constrained spaces opportunities to express practical, if improvisational, modes of religiosity that challenge both traditional mores and classifications prevalent in religious studies.





Figure 7.4 Ken Kesey and the Merry Pranksters' "Furthur" bus.

### Practical, improvisational spiritualities

The press release from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction ceremony in 2014 said, "Much about the Grateful Dead was improvised or left to chance. There was a laissez-faire anarchy that assumed things would work out as the cosmos intended. This faith in a universal order, gleaned from the start at Kesey's Acid Tests, freed them to pursue music without the usual constraints."<sup>40</sup> Interestingly, this anarchistic approach was grounded in a "faith" in a universal order. More often than not, the ultimate order was imagined to be grounded in forces or relationships that were very this-worldly, immanent rather than existing in some transcendent realm. In many cases this seems to manifest in a sort of normative improvisation, as individual mores are scrutinized, questioned, and sometimes overturned. Such situational ethics also seem to overlay a metaphysic of interconnection that underpins many of the moral pronouncements that derive from the scene.

Dark green modes of religiosity—those that have in common a perception, grounded in emotive experience, that living things or even the biosphere itself are sacred and that there is an ethical obligation to engage in behaviors that protect or enhance ecosystem fecundity<sup>41</sup>—are relatively common within improvisational rock subcultures, even among those who identify with a specific institutionalized religious group. Over 75 percent of the respondents ( $n = 651$ ) to the survey on which this chapter is based expressed some sense of obligation to care for or protect nonhuman nature, and well over one-fifth (23%) assented to the idea that "there is no such thing as an 'environment' separate from humans"

( $n = 651$ ); these sentiments are clearly present in predecessor movements. Some sentiments expressed by fans of the Grateful Dead will be illustrative. One fan wrote:

I grew to love the Grateful Dead because they sang more songs about love, happiness, hope, sharing, helping, and caring than any other band I've ever listened to. Jerry Garcia lived his life this way and taught others to do the same. It is kind of ironic that this is considered the "counterculture." . . . I grew to love the Grateful Dead because they passionately care about our fragile planet. Our precious plants, animals, land, water and air are for our compassionate use—not abuse. The Dead encouraged people to become actively involved in protecting and wisely using our resources . . . I grew to love the Grateful Dead because they were about higher consciousness. They wanted you to break beyond the "conventional" norms of society—to live your life by your own values, beliefs and desires. I grew to love the Grateful Dead because they never wanted you to hurt or harm any living creature . . . They showed us the way we ought to live—in a loving, caring, compassionate and gentle manner.

Or, in the words of another:

We just wanted you to know that we have gone out and done something with our lives as a result of seeing the Grateful Dead in the late '70s through the '80s and into the '90s . . . We left our urban life five years ago and we now live in a solar powered log cabin in the hills of S.W. Wisconsin. We garden organically and we sell organic sprouts of all kinds wholesale and at the Dane Co. Farmer's Market (in Madison, WI). We also sell home sprouting kits like the one enclosed in the hopes that people who don't grow their own food and/or live life on a treadmill might become inspired to change. We actively oppose things like the current marketing of Bt engineered crops, BGH in the milk supply and the proposed expansion of low level military flyovers of F16s, B52s, you name it, in our area of SW Wisconsin. We are part of a larger community in this area composed of homesteaders, artists, craftspeople, musicians, and alternative people of all kinds. . . . We just wanted you to know, since we could not be there [Jerry's memorial], that the Grateful Dead and Jerry Garcia in particular have made a great difference in the life of our family; how we conduct ourselves and what we do for the world.<sup>42</sup>

There are hundreds of folders full of letters in the official archives, many of which convey religious themes or deploy religious imagery, and in many cases condolence cards themselves carry religious imagery, often related to dharmic or indigenous traditions. The continuing influence of such non-Western

philosophical and religious symbols and themes is clearly a continuation of the flourishing of countercultural interest in these traditions in the 1950s and 1960s, and they continue to represent a holism and interconnectivity supposedly absent from Western religions. Environmental and social issues were often and easily connected to other countercultural forms in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and some of these letters illustrate the continuing influence of these dark green and countercultural values into the end of the twentieth century, and likely beyond.

An important question however is whether, and to what extent, these experiences are translated into consistent action. The above quotes from Grateful Dead fans were written in 1995 by fans attempting to make sense of their grief over the death of Jerry Garcia, the frontman for the Grateful Dead. Many expressed nostalgia for a way of life that was presumed to be going extinct with Jerry's death. "Going on tour"—leaving behind jobs, daily routines, and oftentimes family—emerged during the 1970s and 1980s as the Dead and other jam bands with heavy tour schedules gathered a following, and it remains an important part of the scene. Today, among fans of Phish, Widespread Panic, moe., String Cheese Incident, and others the number of shows attended—and especially the number of concerts per tour attended—demonstrates the "headiness" or level of commitment to the band of individuals.<sup>43</sup> In the 1960s and 1970s many were able to go on the road following a band for an entire tour, often funding their journey by selling food, drugs, or other bootleg merchandise in the parking lots near concert venues. This is still a feature of the jam band scene, although my conversations and interviews suggest that it is much rarer than it once was.

As improvisational rock became a powerful cultural force in the 1960s and 1970s, some discovered how to commodify such movements, radically changing the communal feel. For instance, on the thirty-year anniversary of Woodstock another festival was held, this time televised on MTV and funded by corporate sponsors. It erupted into riots and violence, a scene opposite in significant ways from the first festival. Some venues have actively discouraged the sale of unlicensed merchandise. Festivals almost always include a selection of both food and alcohol, licensed by the festival organizers, and the competition with professionalized food vendors has significantly reduced the number of people who make and sell food in lots surrounding the venues. In addition, today nearly all tickets are handled through Ticketmaster, or LiveNation, two companies that merged in 2010 and, according to many fans, have a monopoly over the industry, which allows the companies to charge exorbitant fees. Fans frequently note that "Ticketbastard," as the firm is often called, now also owns Stub Hub, the leading secondary resale venue for tickets for sold-out events, illustrating

the corporatization of such events. But fans have responded by exploiting social media to generate alternative economies for goods. At least a few bands have social media pages that provide a place to re-sell tickets at face value, and fans sell bootleg merchandise on various webpages and social media sites. Improvisational rock subcultures have adapted to this corporatization and media commodification by building extended online communities, but the physical scenes around improvisational rock performances began exhibiting distinct participant hierarchies beginning in the early 1990s, gaining momentum in the early twenty-first century.

There is some continuity between the *liminoid* experimentations of the 1960s and contemporary improvisational rock subcultures—at least in their adaptability and in their use of non-Western symbols, metaphors, and tropes to characterize their often spiritualized vision of community. The generation and spread of positive energies and the dharmic notion of karma are frequently invoked to explain morally charged events. A sense of interconnectedness is further illustrated by noting that 54 percent of my survey respondents ( $n = 587$ ) assented to the statement "I have a strong affinity, spiritual reverence, or ethical concern for nature," indicating that for these individuals nonhuman nature holds some spiritual (inherent, rather than utility) value. Several respondents added further comments regarding their spirituality by expressing animistic or pantheistic spiritual sentiments. To provide just a handful of illustrations, one of my respondents said s/he "no longer attend[ed] church—[I] find spirit in [the] natural world," while another opined, "Nature is my deity." One person claimed to be "extremely spiritual" and to "see the divine everywhere, in everything and everyone," a distinctly pantheistic sentiment. In an invocation of Gaia theory, the notion that the Earth is a self-regulating organism, one person said "the world is a living being and human[s] should be helping her/him live and prosper," and one respondent even stated that they were a "fan of james lovelocks . . . gaia hypothesis [*sic*]."<sup>44</sup> In my experience these animistic and pantheistic metaphysics, and concomitant ethical obligations, are fairly common among performance-oriented subcultures.

One of the largest festivals, Bonnaroo, advertises the "Bonnaroo Code," which asks participants to "play as a team," "radiate positivity," and recycle and reduce waste, and invites them to "apply what you do on The Farm [the festival location] to improving you and the world beyond 'Roo."<sup>45</sup> Although the Code exhorts people to continue their positive behaviors beyond the festival grounds, it is clear that there is a special normative dimension to performance events that does not obtain in all facets of participants' lives. For instance, one fan declared

on a social media outlet that he enjoyed going to shows because it allowed him to re-embody his “real self,” something his occupational endeavors did not foster. Many others also expressed this disconnect between their work life and a more authentic way of being, epitomized by the fellow-feeling and communalism experienced at performance events. Moreover, these normative expressions of the subjunctive mood are frequently expressed in religious language or imagery, for instance by one concert-goer who posted that he was “Heading to Church [:] 6pm Sermon with the boys [Widespread Panic].”<sup>46</sup> Too, consider the woman who expressed that she was on the way to the show to “Dance my prayers.” One informant who self-identified as a Pentecostal stated “I often feel God @ Panic shows. I do the same as I meet him every time . . . I dance & sing with praise . . . I am so grateful for the experiences I get to have with 1000’s of my best friends all feeling good!! Perfect place to dance your prayers!!!”<sup>47</sup>

An artist called The Polish Ambassador stated on his social media site the following description of a performance:

For an hour and a half friends, family, and extended tribe made their way around the table and dance floor: smiles beaming, hearts bursting open, tears welling up, people dancing their prayers.

It felt more real, more connected than any performance I’ve ever played. Fully immersed in the crowd. Fully tapped into the collective movement and consciousness that was that dance floor. It felt like a ceremony, a hive mind movement meditation with a continuous exchange of giving and receiving, both ways by audience and performer. For me, there was no clear separation. At the end of my set, a flood of tears spilled forth.<sup>48</sup>

John Bell (JB), lead singer and rhythm guitarist for Widespread Panic recollected his experience at a Grateful Dead show, saying:

Jerry Garcia’s talking Guitar and vocal approach together painted images that let me experience the music on both a personal and what I believed to be a universal level. Jerry and the Band were playing and singing, but it also seemed that they were letting the songs play them (the musicians), as well—creating a kind of “musical sincerity.” That “letting the song play you” impression has since played a part in the way I try to apply myself to a tune—be it an original, or someone else’s.<sup>49</sup>

JB was expressing the notion that music has agency that flows from some universal force or source and helps to shape these transitory but highly affective experiences, an idea echoed by both movement participants and other musicians.

My ethnographic work, in-depth interviews, and participation in social media groups indicate that such sentiments, and their expression in religious imagery and language, is commonplace. Yet these spiritual sentiments, though consistent across time, have proved to be radically adaptable, infiltrating the Web and social media to generate new forms of cultural production. There are now virtual venues that act as news sources about improvisational rock bands, some that act as trading posts for bootleg recordings of favorite artists, and others that are closed chat pages where fans interact. Live audio streaming of many performances now offers a mediated means of participation for people to listen to concerts from the comfort of their homes, often chatting online with others who are on “couch tour,” as it is often called. Even when fans go to shows, social media and smartphones make it much easier for people to reconnect in person, facilitating social exchange, something not possible even twenty years ago. These are improvisational, practical, and often transitory spiritualities.

The above examples illustrate that at least some of the spiritualities that sprout from these subcultures are about recognizing and embracing some affective experience in the present moment, not about some transcendent or rational religious experience. Moreover, these are hybrid spiritualities that cobble together both traditional religious imagery and practice with indigenous, dharmic, and sometimes biocentric forms of religious expression, some measure of moral flexibility, and the importance of belongingness and fellow-feeling. It is clear that some of the normative and spiritual components of improvisational rock subcultures persist, though the cultural geographies in which they are expressed has shifted dramatically. It remains to be seen whether there will be another cultural “moment” like the late 1960s where such fellow-feeling and community experimentation can gain traction.

## Conclusions

Conversations and experiences with participants in rock subcultures revealed spiritual sensibilities that often exhibited a metaphysics of interconnection, an ethical stance primarily informed by emotively rich experiences of fellow-feeling and a desire for communitarian or egalitarian living arrangements or experiences. In some cases, however, such desires and ethical orientations are manifested only temporarily—*liminoid* departures from a real-world where many occupational habitats do not promote feelings of interdependence—and where many scene participants enjoy their ability to live at relatively high standards.

My ethnographic and survey data illuminate two important points about these unique religious formations. First, many of them express such a metaphysics of interconnection and mutual dependence, and ethical norms related to fellow-feeling and care, while also expressing at least nominal adherence to one of the so-called world religions. A hypothesis in need of further study, then, is that the multiple religious belonging exhibited by many of these participants in improvisational rock subcultures is also characteristic of broader populations. There are few if any survey tools that adequately tease out the multiple communities of accountability to which various individuals belong, including their multifarious and sometimes contradictory religious commitments. Second, it is clear that the embodied experiences related to improvisational rock scenes are formative for individuals' religious and ethical sentiments, sometimes providing a language for expressing deeply affective experiences or a framework for understanding them. This points toward the poverty of analyses that uncritically posit that it is some vaguely defined idealized worldview that shapes and constrain behaviors. Instead, it is experiences that shape and constrain the cognitive commitments to various spiritual practices and understandings. I am not arguing for a simple reversal of causation—that it is *only* practices that shape ideation and worldviews—but rather I aim to illustrate that participation in specific groups and exposure to their norms and spiritual sensibilities during highly affective moments shape normative and religious sentiments in important ways.

Outstanding questions remain. Do these transitory, practical, improvisational spiritualities translate into any measurable differences in behavior outside concert or festival venues? Do experiences of *communitas* and engagement in *liminoid* experiences challenge a general desire in everyday experience for comfort, security, and predictability? Do contemporary improvisational rock subcultures represent a resurrection of the revolutionary social movements of the late 1960s, or the opposite, and are they capitalist structures that participate in the domestication of dissent through the corporatization and commodification of popular music?<sup>50</sup> Certainly some people have been so moved by their musical experiences that they have enacted new behaviors, and participation in these subcultures have convinced some individuals to divest from the "real world" and to live in intentional communities. But my sense is that this is the exception, that most scene participants treat these experiences as another joyous occasion to "unplug" from their usual routines and commitments. The consolidation of record labels and ticketing agencies contributed to the economic stratification of concerts as VIP and Super-VIP

tickets became common. The same trends ensured that performances are occasional *liminoid* experiences rather than an enduring lifestyle commitment. These are the remnants, the hot coals and ashes that continue to smolder from earlier countercultural movements, and it remains to be seen whether they spark, or indeed catch fire again.



- 39 Jonathan Baxter (HoopPath founder) in discussion with Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand, August 2014.
- 40 Jonathan Baxter began teaching hooping workshops and began HoopPath, Inc. in 2005, but he began dedicating a significant portion of his time and energy into HoopPath in 2008, when he increased the number of his workshop tours and released a HoopPath DVD. In 2010 he joined Facebook, creating both a personal page (which currently has nearly 5,000 friends) and a business page for HoopPath (which currently has over 4,500 likes). In addition, Baxter has a Twitter account (@HoopPath) established in 2010 and a HoopPath website (<http://www.hoopath.com/>). However, the oldest and most consistent means of communication between Baxter and his audience is YouTube ([www.YouTube.com/user/jlbaxter](http://www.YouTube.com/user/jlbaxter)), where he began posting videos in 2006. Since July 2006, Baxter has posted over forty videos. His YouTube channel has nearly 3,000 subscribers, with some videos viewed over 21,000 times.

## Chapter 6

- 1 Gilles Deleuze, *Proust & Signs: The Complete Text*, trans. Richard Howard; *Theory Out of Bounds*, vol. 17 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000. [Orig. pub. Presses Universitaires de France, 1964.]), 92.
- 2 Interviews as well as weekly transcription of gathering times material were collected using participant observation from August 2009 to August 2010. Participants were over the age of 21 and signed permissions. IRB protocol from the University of Denver is 2009-1124. All respondent names are changed.
- 3 Thomas R. Lindlof, "Media Audiences as Interpretive Communities," in *Communication Yearbook* 11, ed. J. A. Anderson, (1988): 81-107; Thomas R. Lindlof, "Interpretive Community: An Approach to Media and Religion," *Journal of Media and Religion* 1, no. 1 (2002): 61-74.
- 4 Lindlof, "Interpretive Community," 63.
- 5 Stolow's work, as defined below, blurs the lines between "religion" as connection (tied to the original Latin meaning of religio, "that which binds") and media as connection (i.e., an object or communicative activity that conveys meaning or affect). Another Way participants subconsciously identify both religion and media as connective, but also recognize their disjunctive or sedimentary properties.
- 6 Stanley Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980).
- 7 "If meaning develops, and if it develops in a dynamic relationship with the reader's expectations, projections, conclusions, judgments, and assumptions, these activities (the things the reader does) are not merely instrumental, or mechanical,

but essential, and the act of description must both begin and end with them. In practice, this resulted in the replacing of one question—what does this mean?—by another—what does this do? . . . The reader was now given joint responsibility for the production of a meaning that was itself redefined as an event rather than an entity . . . In this formulation, the reader's response is not to the meaning; it is the meaning." Fish, *Is There a Text*, 3.

- 8 "An interpreting entity, endowed with purposes and concerns, is, by virtue of its very operation, determining what counts as the facts to be observed. . . . linguistic and textual facts, rather than being the objects of interpretation, are its products." Fish, *Is There a Text*, 8.
- 9 Fish, *Is There a Text*, 14.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 16.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 171.
- 12 Jeremy Stolow, "Religion and/as Media," *Theory, Culture, & Society* 22, no. 4 (2005): 119-45.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 122-3.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 125.
- 15 *Ibid.*, 127.
- 16 Lindlof, "Media Audiences," 81-2.
- 17 *Ibid.*, 103.
- 18 Lindlof, "Interpretive Community," 63-5.

## Chapter 7

\* The broader research project from which this chapter was drawn used a combination of historical analysis, ethnographic work among performance-oriented subcultures, interviews with fans, as well as promoters, nonprofit organizations, and others who advertise or offer services at concerts and festivals, and a survey that asked respondents to report on environmental behaviors, religious practices, and convictions, and their relationship to musical and other artistic performance (WFU IRB: 00021450). I am grateful to the Wake Forest Center for Energy, Environment, and Sustainability (CEES) for their generous support of this project.

- 1 This recollection of a miracle story was supplied by an informant on February 9, 2015. When the subject reports that his friend was puddled with some good liquid, it means that his friend received a complimentary dose of liquid LSD from a "hippie" in a neighboring seat.
- 2 Many scholars have found it important to distinguish between religions and spiritualities for specific research aims, but such distinctions are not necessary to



any case I hope to make here. Thus, I use religion and spirituality interchangeably in what follows, though I ultimately imagine various practical spiritualities to be a subset of what I mean by "religion." Religions should not be imagined as related only to the categories of the so-called world religions, rather analyses ought to focus on the religious dimensions of human life wherever they are found, including among individuals who do not identify with specific institutionalized religions.

- 3 Colin Campbell, "The Cult, The Cultic Milieu and Secularization," in *A Sociological Yearbook of Religion in Britain* (London: SCM Books, 1972), 119–36.
- 4 See Bron Taylor, "Diggers, Wolves, Ents, Elves and Expanding Universes: Bricolage, Religion, and Violence from Earth First! and the Earth Liberation Front to the Antiglobalization Resistance," in *The Cultic Milieu: Oppositional Subcultures in an Age of Globalization*, ed. Jeffrey Kaplan and Helen Loow (Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira, 2002); Bron Raymond Taylor, *Dark Green Religion: Nature Spirituality and the Planetary Future* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).
- 5 Lucas F. Johnston, *Religion and Sustainability: Social Movements and the Politics of the Environment* (Sheffield; Bristol, CT: Equinox, 2013).
- 6 See Mary Evelyn Tucker and Duncan Ryūken Williams, *Buddhism and Ecology: The Interconnection of Dharma and Deeds* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Center for the Study of World Religions : Distributed by Harvard University Press, 1997); Mary Evelyn Tucker and John H. Berthrong, *Confucianism and Ecology: The Interrelation of Heaven, Earth, and Humans* (Cambridge, MA: Distributed by Harvard University Press for the Harvard University Center for the Study of World Religions, 1998); Christopher Key Chapple, *Hinduism and Ecology: The Intersection of Earth, Sky, and Water* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000); Dieter T. Hessel and Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Christianity and Ecology: Seeking the Well-Being of Earth and Humans* (Cambridge, MA: Distributed by Harvard University Press for the Harvard University Center for the Study of World Religions, 2000); John Grim, *Indigenous Traditions and Ecology: The Interbeing of Cosmology and Community* (Cambridge, MA: Distributed by Harvard Press for the Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard Divinity School, 2001); Christopher Key Chapple, *Jainism and Ecology: Nonviolence in the Web of Life* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002); Tirosh-Samuelson 2002; Richard Foltz, Frederick Mathewson Denny, and Azizan Haji Baharuddin, *Islam and Ecology: a Bestowed Trust* (Cambridge, MA: Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard Divinity School : Distributed by Harvard University Press, 2003); John Grim and Mary Evelyn Tucker, *Ecology and Religion* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2014).
- 7 Important genealogical critiques of the category of "world religions" have illustrated that such categorizations are at best ethnocentric, and at worst perpetuate a colonialist imposition of Western categories on cultural, ethnic, and ethical "others" (see Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions, or, How*

*European Universalism Was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005]; Russell T. McCutcheon, *Studying Religion: An Introduction* [London; Oakville, CT: Equinox Pub, 1997]; Russell T. McCutcheon, *Critics Not Caretakers: Redefining the Public Study of Religion* [Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001]; Dubuisson 2003; Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* [Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993]).

- 8 The number of such festivals seems to have increased over time. The website *jambase.com* listed 335 jam-oriented music festivals in the United States scheduled for 2015. *Jambase.com*, accessed February 9, 2015.
- 9 Kesey received positive critical attention for his novel *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1962). LSD is ultimately derived from a grain fungus, first synthesized in a laboratory in 1938 by Albert Hoffman, and the psychedelic properties of which were accidentally discovered by him in 1943. The term "entheogen" literally translates as "god generated within," a term that religious studies scholar Chas Clifton suggests "better describes the drugs' religious use than do such words as 'intoxicant' (literally, poisonous), 'hallucinogenic' (causing hallucinations) . . . or 'psychedelic' (soul-showing)." Chas Clifton, "Entheogens," in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature*, ed. Bron Taylor (London: Continuum, 2005), 596–7.
- 10 This was certainly true for many, but not all participants in this scene. No doubt there were people whose primary concerns were experimentation with psychotropic substances and a good party. But this spiritual motivation certainly seems to have been formative for many of the charismatic leaders of these movements. I am grateful to Todd LeVasseur for suggesting that I make this explicit.
- 11 Johnston, *Religion and Sustainability*, 52–3.
- 12 Charles Y. Glock, Robert N. Bellah, and Randy Alfred, *The New Religious Consciousness* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976).
- 13 Kevin Michael DeLuca, *Image Politics: The New Rhetoric of Environmental Activism* (New York: Guilford Press, 1999).
- 14 Robert Bellah, "The New Consciousness and the Berkeley New Left," in *The New Religious Consciousness*, ed. Charles Glock and Robert Bellah (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 77–92.
- 15 Leary and Alpert were famous for encouraging students to experiment with LSD and to drop out of college. Their argument was essentially that there were higher forms of knowledge, accessible through psychedelic journeys, that ought to be pursued, and universities were some of the primary purveyors of the status quo.
- 16 Victor Turner, "Process, System, and Symbol: A New Anthropological Synthesis," in *Daedalus* 106 (1977): 71, quoted in Mihai Coman, "Liminality in Media Studies: From Everyday Life to Media Events," in *Victor Turner and Contemporary Cultural Performance* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2008), 94–108, esp. 95.

- 17 Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (New York: Aldine Publishers, 1969).
- 18 Douglas Martin, "Swami Satchidananda, Woodstock's Guru, Dies at 87," *The New York Times*, sec. World, August 21, 2002, <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/08/21/world/swami-satchidananda-woodstock-s-guru-dies-at-87.html>.
- 19 Michael Wadleigh, et al., *Woodstock 3 Days of Peace & Music* (Burbank, CA: Warner Bros. Pictures, Distributed by Warner Home Video, 2009).
- 20 This specific scene in the film is worthy of more precise dissection that cannot be performed here, but there is an irony to the teacher's note that he is imparting to the gathered group ancient techniques (at least 6,000 years old), which he learned in Los Angeles while experimenting with entheogenic substances.
- 21 DMT is short for the entheogenic compound N-dimethyltryptamine.
- 22 Wadleigh et al., *Woodstock*.
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 Will Keepin, "Breathwork," in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature*, ed. Bron Taylor (London: Continuum, 2005), 215.
- 25 Holotropic breathwork typically results in a "journey" in which "breathers become aware of deeper dimensions of their own consciousness, often evoking experiences of tremendous insight, healing, or psychological or spiritual significance." Keepin, "Breathwork," 215.
- 26 See Bron Taylor, "Diggers," and *Dark Green Religion*.
- 27 Graham Harvey, *Food, Sex, and Strangers: Understanding Religion as Everyday Life* (Durham, UK: Acumen, 2013).
- 28 See <http://guides.library.ucsc.edu/c.php?g=119783&p=780833>, accessed December 3, 2014.
- 29 See <http://www.gdao.org/exhibits/show/posters/second-wave>, accessed December 3, 2014.
- 30 See <http://www.gdao.org/exhibits/show/posters/bob-fried>, accessed November 11, 2014.
- 31 See <http://www.gdao.org/exhibits/show/posters/end-of-fillmore>, accessed November 13, 2014.
- 32 See Glock, Bellah, and Alfred, *New Religious Consciousness*.
- 33 Ibid., xi.
- 34 Jeff Wood's website, accessed November 18, 2014, <http://zendragongallery.com/collections/rock-posters/products/christmas-jam-2013-conscious-alliance>. Conscious Alliance is a Boulder, Colorado-based organization that focuses on youth empowerment and feeding the hungry.
- 35 Bron Taylor, *Dark Green Religion*.
- 36 The term theriomorphic refers to a preternatural or supernatural being that takes animal form.

- 37 For examples, see <https://www.etsy.com/search?q=Phish%20shirt> (a search for any specific band will reveal a bevy of merchandise), or <http://www.bravefriend.net/>, accessed December 3, 2014. Figure 7.2 is a photo of such a shirt, produced by a vendor who identifies as "Doin' Good Things." The shirt depicts lyrics from a song titled "Plastic Jesus" and includes a small Jesus statuette on a car dashboard. The song was first performed by The Goldcoast Singers, three men who made up the group name and sang the song as a parody on a radio show in 1962. The song was made famous by an appearance in the film *Cool Hand Luke*. This shirt was marketed to Widespread Panic fans after the band covered the song during their 2014 fall tour. The lyrics are credited to Ed Cromarty and George Rush (the Goldcoast Singers), with more verses added over the years. The song illustrates the perception among many scene participants that traditional religious groups and beliefs are ambiguous.
- 38 *Backyardrevolution*, accessed December 3, 2014, <http://backyardrevolution.com>.
- 39 Thomas Wolfe, *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 1968).
- 40 "Grateful Dead Biography," *Rock and Roll Hall of Fame*, accessed July 2, 2014, <http://rockhall.com/inductees/the-grateful-dead/bio/#sthash.DwTXcmtq.dpuf>.
- 41 See Bron Taylor, *Dark Green Religion*.
- 42 I found these quotes in letters during a visit to the Grateful Dead archives at University of California, Santa Cruz, on August 1–2, 2014.
- 43 The term "headiness" to describe individual concert-goers is likely traceable to the term "deadhead," the term typically used to describe Grateful Dead fans. Today fans will self-identify as "Phishheads" (for the band Phish) or "Spreadheads" (for Widespread Panic). In addition, however, many of the drugs, paraphernalia, and other merchandise sold in the lots or within concert venues are described as "heady," which supposedly denotes their high quality. Both terms are possibly related to its application to individual concert-goers, also.
- 44 The so-called Gaia Hypothesis was proposed by James Lovelock and Lynn Margulis in 1972.
- 45 *Bonnaroo*, accessed December 3, 2014, <http://www.bonnaroo.com/festival-info#the-code>.
- 46 Fans of Widespread Panic often refer to them simply as "the boys," in some sense expressing the familial sensibility that obtains across the performance-oriented milieu.
- 47 Personal communication, October 16, 2014.
- 48 Author survey, August 12, 2014.
- 49 John Bell et al., "Reflections: Jerry Garcia's Life and Legacy," *Relix*, 2014, accessed December 8, 2015, <https://web4.relix.com/articles/detail/reflections-jerry-garcia-s-life-and-legacy-john-bell-del-mccoury-ethan-mill>.

- 50 The religion scholar Russell McCutcheon (2005) uses the phrase “domestication of dissent” in the title of a book that examines the boundaries and “authenticity” of public discourses related to Islam in the United States post-9/11.

## Chapter 8

- 1 Garry Tregidga, “Stratton to St Keverne; Sites of Memory from the Early Modern Period,” in *Memory, Place and Identity: The Cultural Landscapes of Cornwall*, ed. Garry Tregidga (London: Francis and Taylor Publishers, 2012), 40–53; for an introduction to the territorial dimension to Cornish politics, see Bernard Deacon, Dick Cole, and Garry Tregidga, *Mebyon Kernow and Cornish Nationalism* (Cardiff: Welsh Academic Press, 2003).
- 2 Bernard Deacon, *Cornwall: A Concise History* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007), 2.
- 3 Amy Hale, “Genesis of the Celto-Cornish Revival? L.C. Duncombe Jewell and the Cowethas Kelto-Kernuak,” in *Cornish Studies: Five*, ed. Philip Payton (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1997), 101.
- 4 Derek Williams (ed.), *Henry and Katharine Jenner: A Celebration of Cornwall's Culture, Language and Identity* (London: Francis and Taylor Publications, 2004), 69.
- 5 Philip Payton, “Paralysis and Revival: The Reconstruction of Celtic-Catholic Cornwall 1890–1945,” in *Cornwall: The Cultural Construction of Place*, ed. Ella Westland (Signal Mountain, TN: Patten Press, 1997), 28.
- 6 Sean Kay, *Celtic Revival? The Rise, Fall and Renewal of Global Ireland* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2011).
- 7 *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, January 4, 1878, 6.
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