

**THE BRITISH UNDERGROUND PRESS, 1965-1974: THE LONDON-
PROVINCIAL RELATIONSHIP, AND REPRESENTATIONS OF THE
URBAN AND THE RURAL.**

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DECLARATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Whatever perspective one takes, contradictions in the relationship between the capital and the provinces have always been evident to some extent, and the British underground press of the late 1960s and early 1970s is no exception. The introductory first chapter will define the meaning of the term ‘underground’ in this context, and outline some of the sources used and the methodologies employed. Chapter Two will show how the British underground press developed from an alternative coterie of writers, poets, and artists – often sympathisers of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament movement. It will also show how having developed from roots that were arguably provincial the underground adopted London as its base. The third chapter will take a more detailed look at the background of some London and provincial underground publications and will attempt to see what extent the London underground press portrayed the provinces, and vice-versa. In Chapter Four actual aspects of life in urban and rural settings, such as communes, squats, and pop festivals, will be examined in relation to the adoption of these lifestyles by the wider counterculture and how they were adapted to particular environments as part of an envisioned alternative society. Furthermore, it will also show how the underground press was instrumental in reporting on and, perhaps, influencing the growth of these alternative lifestyles. Indeed underground publications were produced from, and for, particular places, and it might be argued helped to redefine the way in which these areas were perceived by the underground. Finally, an explanation for some of the reasons for the decline of the underground and its press will be put forward.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Defining the Underground and its Press: Methods and Sources.

A brief definition of the term 'underground' is a useful starting point in a study of this kind, and having put forward a suitable definition this chapter will look at some of the sources used in this study. For example, underground publications and oral accounts in the form of autobiographies and interviews will be used, as will secondary sources on the subject of the underground press and related issues such as free festivals, communes, and squatting. This chapter will attempt to offer some explanation of how they might be used, whilst taking into account some of their possible advantages and limitations.

The terms 'underground' and 'counter-culture' are often used synonymously with one another, and will be used as such here. Robert Hewison says the term was initially 'a military metaphor transferred to cultural as opposed to political resistance and sabotage.'¹ Jeff Nuttall, a pivotal force for several years in the underground press, says in his 1968 polemic on alternative culture and the underground, that,

The word Underground was still, in the early sixties not yet in common use. It probably came into use in New York around 1964. Two main activities defined it, finally. Duplicated magazines and home movies.²

However, in the mid 1960s, by the time 'underground' was adopted in Britain, it had developed beyond a convenient term just to be used for an alternative literary and artistic movement. Instead it came to be used for a whole way of life that encompassed all manner of cultural, political, and social expressions, and although 'the counter-culture meant different things to different people at different times, the

only constant was the rejection of the dominant or "straight society" and its culture'.³ The press that developed as part of, or even out of the nascent underground movement was admittedly only part of a wider underground network. But, it was undeniably one of, if not the core element of the counter-culture. Elizabeth Nelson astutely points out that, 'the underground press...serves as the major repository of counter-cultural views and visions'⁴ and 'served, as has been noted "quite literally to hold the movement together and to give it its identity"'.⁵ It might also be argued that the underground press was the only viable institution created by the movement, and is probably the most definitive record of the movement itself.

The underground might be divided into 'two broad categories; the austere revolutionary Left and the more popular or "official" underground as it was labelled'.⁶ Within these two categories, the underground further comprised of a number of different factions ranging from the politically militant Left to those who believed in more mystical or religious matters. Each group, in one way or another, produced some form of underground paper. For example, the revolutionary Left produced *Black Dwarf* (later to become *Red Mole*), obviously political in content, whilst the more mystic hippy types produced *Gandalf's Garden*, dedicated to more esoteric or 'cosmic' issues. However, the popular London underground papers such as *International Times (IT)* and *Oz* drew upon a broad spectrum of aesthetic, cultural, political, social and theoretical perspectives, representing the variety of factions that the underground press encompassed. Therefore, the views expressed within the more popular underground press might sometimes appear ambivalent. To quote Richard Neville from his contemporary underground 'manifesto', *Playpower*,

The tone of the Underground papers is pugnaciously partisan and each reporter is, in a sense, his own editorialist - which is why so few of these papers carry distinct opinion sections.⁷

As Nigel Fountain says, 'That press didn't just argue with the established order, it polemicized furiously within itself: generating exciting, crazy, repetitive and innovative language and design'.⁸

According to Bouchier, the use of underground publications as a means of trying to understand the ideologies of the counterculture is potentially problematic because those involved in the production of underground publications are more likely to be 'activist minded' than others.⁹ Furthermore, objectivity was never one of the underground press's strong points - not that it was ever claimed to be. In addition, the lack of editorial policy in some publications might also make it difficult for a researcher to determine what stance a publication took on a particular subject from one issue to the next. This emphasises the fluidity of the underground press despite its general anti-establishment character. But, ultimately, it must be remembered that it is 'primarily within that press that the documentary record of the social history of the counter-culture lies'.¹⁰ It therefore becomes the major archive of the counterculture from which its ideas values and aspirations may be extracted.

The use of underground publications themselves, along with secondary material can help to provide a background to the papers in question. The more popular London and provincial underground papers drew upon a broad spectrum of aesthetic, cultural, political, social, and theoretical perspectives rather than being solely concerned with one particular issue, such as politics. It is for this reason that the London papers *International Times (IT)*, *Friends / Frenz*, and *Oz*, and to a lesser extent, the provincial papers *Mole Express* and *Grass Eye* from Manchester, and *Styng* from Barnsley will be main publications used for this study. Of the few books of any significance produced by the underground, the following three are arguably

the most useful. Jeff Nuttall's *Bomb Culture* from 1968 deals more with the cultural aspects of the underground's past and its development throughout the sixties. Mick Farren and Edward Barker's *Watch out Kids* from 1972 came at a time when the underground was clearly on the wane.¹¹ It traces the development of teenage revolt and subcultures from the fifties to the counterculture, and becomes a somewhat paranoid indictment of 'straight' society as well as a revolutionary portent of an alternative society - both urban and rural. Richard Neville's *Playpower* was published at the height of the underground and combined 'a hippy tour d'horizon...(with) a brief overview of anything remotely "alternative"'.¹² Although, in some ways, all could be described as sociological analyses-cum-political manifestos of the counter-culture, each represents a different aspect of, and stage in the development of the underground. Most of the more recent work on the subject of the British underground press has also been undertaken by those previously involved with the underground press. Nigel Fountain, one time contributor to various underground publications, and more recently a *Guardian* writer, draws heavily on 'the assistance of the people who worked on the papers' for his comprehensive examination of the London underground press.¹³ Bob Dickinson, also partly relies on the experiences of writers and key figures in the Manchester underground press.¹⁴ Other names from the underground who have written autobiographies or related their experiences of the underground press in some detail are Roger Hutchinson, who moved from the provincial underground press to the capital, Richard Neville, founder of *Oz*, and Jonathon Green, one time editor of both *Oz* and *IT*.¹⁵ Green has also compiled an oral history of the British Underground, between 1961 and 1971, that records numerous accounts of events that shaped and typified the underground. However, the contributors for the large part appear at least to have been

acquaintances of Green, and made up part of what might be described as the 'elite' of the underground movement, and the book includes few accounts by the average underground adherent. Nevertheless, it still represents a wide spectrum of views from across the underground.

In a similar way to the papers and magazines of the underground press, sources which have been written by, or are reliant on people involved in the underground press may be tainted by the biases of those involved. For example, interviews might be an unreliable source of information due to distortion of memory. On the other hand, the use of evidence gleaned from interviews has the obvious advantage of being first hand, and, in some cases, provides information where no other documented evidence exists. Mick Farren, one time editor of *IT* agreed to be interviewed for this study by e-mail, as he now lives in America. These questions are oriented towards the urban, provincial and rural, and provided new perspectives on the subjects in question.

As for secondary sources, Philip Rycroft's 'Mapping the Underground' thesis is useful in providing some general background and geographical perspective of the London underground press.¹⁶ Because music festivals - free or otherwise - became an integral part of the underground lifestyle, Michael Clarke's *The Politics of Pop Festivals*¹⁷ is useful in offering some sociological analysis of the festival phenomenon as well as providing some contemporary views on the subject other than those of the underground press. Similarly, Nelson's critique of the festival scene and rural commune movement also offsets some of the more idealistic notions propounded by the popular underground press.¹⁸

Communes are to be found in both urban and rural settings, and there is ample coverage of both rural and urban communities in the pages of the underground

press, but ultimately it is with the urban that the underground press seems primarily concerned. The importance of community control and 'the street' are regular themes within the underground press, and the provincial underground papers often regarded the street and issue of community politics with great gravitas. Although primarily concerned with the American underground press, Roger Lewis devotes a whole chapter to 'the street and the community', which he explains is as applicable to Europe as it is to America.¹⁹ Bob Dickinson's *Imprinting the Sticks: The Alternative Press beyond London* is a useful companion to use with the provincial papers used in this study to determine whether things were different at a local level, and how the provincial world-view compared with that of London.²⁰

Although there are books which concentrate on the London underground press and provincial underground press, in particular Manchester, there is apparently no specific work on the British underground press in relation to how urban, provincial, and rural issues were portrayed, and how these issues were placed in the context of the wider underground movement. Therefore, it follows that an examination of selected underground newspapers will make up a significant part of this study. The importance of using underground publications themselves to determine how urban or provincial aspects were represented is self-evident in that the press was probably the most effective form of media the underground movement possessed. The views portrayed within its pages usually reflected the opinions of the various factions that came under the underground banner.

The pros and cons of various sources and how they might be utilised have been mentioned here, and primary sources in particular can be used to ascertain the way in which both London and provincial underground publications dealt with urban and rural issues, whilst secondary sources can also be used, especially in providing a

background to events leading up to the emergence of the underground press in the 1960s. Therefore, the above mixture of primary sources and secondary sources, including interviews, memoirs, underground publications, and mainstream press coverage among others, will hopefully provide a balanced and informative account of the underground press and some of the ways in which it represented aspects of an urban, provincial and rural nature.

CHAPTER ONE: ENDNOTES

1. Robert Hewison, *Too Much: Art and Society in the Sixties, 1960-1975* (London, Methuen, 1986) p.82
2. Jeff Nuttall, *Bomb Culture* (1968) (London, Paladin, 1972) p.165
3. Elizabeth Nelson, *The British Counter-Culture, 1966-1973: A Study of the Underground Press* (Basingstoke, MacMillan, 1989) p.8
4. Nelson, *British Counter-Culture*, p.46
5. D. Bouchier, *Idealism and Revolution: New Ideologies of Liberation in Britain and the United States* (London, 1978) p.152, in Nelson, *British Counter-Culture*, p.46
6. Simon Rycroft, 'Mapping the Underground: Geographies of British and American Counter-Cultures, 1950-1975.', (Unpublished doctoral thesis, Nottingham University, 1993) p.124
7. Richard Neville, *Playpower*, (London, Jonathan Cape, 1970) p.158
8. Nigel Fountain, *Underground: The London Alternative press, 1966-1974* (London, Comedia / Routledge, 1988) p.vii
9. Bouchier, *Idealism and Revolution*, p.153, in Nelson, *British Counter-Culture*, p.46
10. M. Brake, *The Sociology of Youth Culture and Youth Subcultures* (London, 1980) p.103, in Nelson, *British Counter-Culture*, p.47
11. Mick Farren & Edward Barker, *Watch Out Kids* (London, Open Gate Books, 1972)
12. Jonathon Green, *All Dressed Up: The Sixties and the Counterculture* (London, Jonathan Cape, 1998) p. 360
13. Fountain, *Underground*, p.viii
14. Bob Dickinson, *Imprinting the Sticks: The Alternative Press Beyond London* (Aldershot, Arena, 1997)
15. Roger Hutchinson, *High Sixties: The Summers of Riot and Love* (Edinburgh, Mainstream Publishing, 1992) Richard Neville, *Hippie Hippie Shake: The Dreams, the Trips, the Trials, the Love-ins, the Screw ups...the Sixties* (London, Bloomsbury, 1995) Jonathon Green, *Days in the Life: Voices from the English Underground, 1961-1971* (London, Heinemann, 1988)

16. Philip Rycroft, 'Mapping the Underground: Geographies of British and American Counter-Cultures, 1950-1975', (Unpublished PhD. Thesis, Nottingham University, 1993)
17. Michael Clarke, *The Politics of Pop Festivals* London, Junction, 1982)
18. Nelson, *British Counter-Culture*, pp.122-130
19. Roger Lewis, *Outlaws of America: The Underground Press and its Context: Notes on a Cultural Revolution* (Harmondsworth, Pelican, 1972) pp24-31
20. Dickinson, *Imprinting the Sticks*

CHAPTER TWO

Going Underground

It has been suggested that the British counterculture, although part of developments that were occurring on a global scale, needed an intellectual heritage in which it could ‘take root’.¹ Nelson argues that,

...the nineteenth-century Romantics provided some intellectual – spiritual, even – links with the essentially romantic and messianic blend of anarchism and diverse interpretations of socialism so important to the counterculture.²

Admittedly, the anarchistic tendencies made evident by the non-conformity of experiments in communal living, the eradication of institutionalised sexual relationships, and the use of mind altering drugs are characteristics familiar to both the Romantics of the nineteenth-century and the counterculture of the 1960s. With some stretch of the imagination, it might not be too hard to make a comparison between the libertines of the 1960s counterculture and the likes of Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Shelley, Wollstonecraft, De Quincey and the like. However, a less distant source of the underground’s roots might arguably be traced to the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), and the beatnik movement of the 1950s, which was only part of the wider social, cultural, and political upheavals that occurred after the second world war in Britain, and elsewhere in the world. Without delving too deeply into all the manifestations of this wider sea change in attitudes in the post-war years – as these have been examined in great detail many times

elsewhere – it might be pertinent to mention ‘youth culture’ in the 1950s, if only to provide the context from which the underground press would eventually emerge.

By the mid-1950s youth culture had begun to manifest itself in the form of Teddy boys, and slightly later with anti-bomb protestors and beatniks. Despite the obvious class differences with the Teds ‘the well educated, middle class CND supporters, the art students and the beats were, when viewed from the outside, more like the Teds than they were different from them’ according to Jonathon Green.³ Furthermore, from an adult perspective with its ideas about young people ‘knowing ones place’, ‘being seen and not heard’, and ‘following in father’s footsteps’, and an emphasis on ‘stability, conformity and repetition’, both groups were seen as flagrant abusers of convention, who lacked faith in the ““affluent society”, its goals and rewards’.⁴ The Teds had paved the way for youthful resistance and rebellion by both working class and middle class teenagers alike. Whereas, the working class youth culture of the Teds, and later mods, and rockers of the early 1960s was associated with cinema seat slashing, and seaside battles, middle class youth rebellion related more to the anti-bomb protest movement exemplified by CND.⁵ But both groups came to be unwaveringly regarded as troublemakers who deviated from society’s norms. As Nelson argues,

The distrust between the generations, which the Teds and adult reactions towards them, had brought out into the open, was further exacerbated by the apparent bewilderment felt by many of the older generation when confronted with the image of thousands of crusading, protesting young people.⁶

Jeff Nuttall documents the atmosphere that youthful protesters, with their guitars and singing, increasingly injected into the Aldermaston CND marches as being almost carnival like, as well as contributing to a new folk culture.⁷ He also emphasizes how the, ‘whackier and younger CND followers had gathered in the

Peace Café in the Fulham Road...and formed a cultural nucleus that looked mainly towards America and the Beats for its model'.⁸ Mick Farren recognised that 'CND, although predominantly a youth organisation, seemed divorced from the instinctive revolt of the rock and roll-teenage rebels',⁹ but he also saw the importance that Ban the Bomb marches had on the development of the 1960s underground,

in terms of the interchange of information between traditional pacifists, left wingers and young potential freaks. The later sitdowns and civil disobedience campaigns also brought many middle class kids into first hand contact with police repression.¹⁰

Farren goes on to emphasize the importance that the likes of poets such as Alan Ginsberg had on early counter-cultural musicians, such as Bob Dylan. For the first time, 'Music, youth's major medium of communication, had the ability to carry information of a direct political, or philosophical nature...'.¹¹ Similarly, the work of the American beat poets and novelists did not go unnoticed by the prominent figures who emerged from the fusion of anti-bomb protest and beat culture in Britain. The rudimentary literary and artistic efforts that they would produce in the late 1950s and early 1960s could be described as precursors to the underground papers of the late 1960s and early 1970s. It could therefore be argued that the underground of the 1960s, and its press, evolved from the peace movement and the beatnik culture of the late 1950s.

International Times (IT), generally regarded as Britain's first truly underground newspaper in the 1960s certainly had more than just tenuous links with the peace movement. Several of its key founders had, in one way or another, been involved with anti-bomb activities, and were interested in beat culture. It could also be argued that *IT's* roots were ostensibly provincial in origin. For example, Barry Miles, or plain Miles as he would be more commonly known, was from Cheltenham; Jim Haynes was an American, who had settled in Edinburgh before finding his way

to London; Michael Horovitz, a poet from Oxford; and Jeff Nuttall, originally from the North, would all be influential in the establishment of the underground press. Glasgow born Tom McGrath became *IT's* first editor after being called from a rural retreat in Wales. He was a former features editor of *Peace News*, but this was not *IT's* only link with the peace movement. Barry Miles, a sixteen year old student at his local art college in Cheltenham became interested in the CND movement, and became actively involved in the Aldermaston march in 1959, which was also the domain of thousands of young beatniks by this time. The compatibility between anti-bomb protest and the beatnik culture of poetry, art and so on is evident. Nigel Fountain argues that '[Miles] had interests which moved rapidly across from art into poetry. CND provided the trigger, setting up a network of connections across the country'.¹² Miles would come into contact with a leading beat poet Michael Horovitz at an Oxford commune. It was only a matter of time before his growing interest in the pioneering poetry by the likes of Gregory Corso led him to discover the world of contemporary American beat poets after seeing the address of Lawrence Ferlinghetti's City Lights Bookshop on one of Corso's poems. Miles was transformed by this alternative poetry and began to produce his own poetry magazine, like many similar minded youngsters around the country. The crop of self-produced magazines was different from the semi-official literary magazines that were published throughout the 1950s. For a start they were outside the established literary circle in terms of either recognition or place of publication. According to Robert Hewison, 'Few were published in London or took much notice of it, they were often hand produced on duplicating machines; their life was ephemeral and their readership sometimes little larger than the circle of contributors and their friends'.¹³ The provinces were, therefore, also instrumental in producing this rash of

independent literary magazines at the end of the 1950s, and furthermore they could be regarded as antecedents of what became later known as the underground press. For example, in 1959 Miles' mentor Michael Horovitz established *New Departures* from an Oxford commune; *Migrant* was launched by Gael Turnbull and Michael Shayer in Worcester; and Miles himself published *Tree* whilst at Cheltenham Art College. Along with other magazines like *Poetmeat* (Blackburn), *Underdog* (Liverpool), and *Sidewalk* (Edinburgh), they became popular in 'coffee-bar bohemia' that cultivated the likes of the Liverpool poets and pop groups,¹⁴ or among 'young, frustrated, and disillusioned CND veterans who could be found in such hangouts as the Peace Café in the Fulham Road'.¹⁵

These new literary magazines drew inspiration from the American beat movement. Jazz music and poetry became essential mediums for the beat movement and in turn the nascent underground, and as Hewison observes,

Jazz and poetry became a regular feature of an underground network; these anarchic but essentially celebratory affairs were important forerunners of the conferences, teach-ins, and demonstrations of the later sixties.¹⁶

The self-produced magazines would continue to flourish in the early 1960s, some being more influential than others, for example Jeff Nuttall's *My Own Magazine: A Super Absorbent Periodical*. Nuttall would become an important contributor to *IT*, but would later return to the North to contribute to the short-lived Yorkshire underground newspaper *Styng*. Prior to his involvement with the underground press he too was part of the alternative artistic and literary network which was gradually pulling together to become part of the underground culture. Nelson highlights the lineage of the underground from the peace and beatnik movements by using Nuttall as an example. She says, '[his] involvement in the counter-culture illustrates the

continuity from earlier social / political movements, Nuttall being a veteran of CND marches as well as being involved in early anti-war activities'.¹⁷ Similarly, Miles continued to produce several more magazines throughout the early 1960s, most notably *Long Hair Times*, and would also end up in London by the mid-1960s. Miles also founded his own publication company - Lovebooks, 'a milder predecessor of the company that would run *IT: Knullar*'.¹⁸ Miles had also made connections with the American underground newspaper *East Village Other (EVO)* and was made their London correspondent prior to establishing *IT*. Miles began to bring American underground newspapers such as *Village Voice*, *Los Angeles Free Press*, and *EVO* to the Indica bookshop that he ran. The bookshop helped to provide further connections that would be useful in establishing *IT*. In the meantime, Miles would continue to produce *Long Hair Times* with John Hopkins, later to become *IT*'s first production manager. However, it was ostensibly a magazine rather than a newspaper and Miles' desire to establish a 'real' newspaper increased throughout 1966. After all he had established plenty of contacts through his bookshop and publication company, and as Fountain argues, 'A paper seemed the logical progression, a paper for the 6,000 at the Albert Hall'.¹⁹ That is the Albert Hall Poetry Reading, or 'The Wholly Communion' of June 11 1966. According to Green this date was pivotal in the development of the nascent underground which used this event to 'stand up and be counted'.²⁰ The event was instrumental in,

...symbolically linking the artistic avant-garde, such as Alex Trocchi and Jeff Nuttall, with the beat poets, led by Michael Horovitz, who were linked in the magazine *New Departures*...and the 'little magazine' and bookshop world of such as Miles and Jim Haynes... [Furthermore] it brought together several thousand people who, for want of any more subtle emotion, were just delighted to find that they were not alone.²¹

This coming together of like minded individuals, such as Miles and Jeff Nuttall, was therefore all important in the synthesis of what would develop into the British counterculture, and in no small measure towards the establishment of the British underground press in 1966.

Pursuing his goal of establishing a 'proper' newspaper, '...a paper for the people living in cheap rooms in Notting Hill Gate, Covent Garden, Ladbroke Grove, Chalk Farm, the Gate, the Garden, the Grove, the Farm',²² Miles prudently invited Jim Haynes, founder of Britain's first ever paperback bookshop, and owner of the alternative Traverse Theatre Club in Edinburgh, and Jack Henry Moore onto the Lovebooks board. Haynes in particular had the business acumen and even more contacts important in establishing a newspaper with alternative cultural leanings.

After deciding on a small editorial board of just Jack Henry Moore, Jim Haynes, Miles, and John Hopkins, none of whom wanted to be main editor, Tom McGrath with his experience as features editor at *Peace News* was drafted in as editor. However, they needed to find a willing printer and the only seven offset-litho photo printers in the country were approached but refused to print *IT*. The innovative use of offset print that the underground press, particularly *Oz*, would later become renowned for did not appear until issue 8 of *IT*, the first seven relied on the old, hot metal method.²³ Eventually the first issue of *IT* was published on October 14 1966, and was accompanied shortly after by a launch party at the Roundhouse in Chalk Farm (figure 1). This would be the first of *IT*'s many forays into staging fund-raising events in order to finance itself. As Rycroft says,

IT, more than any other paper, was involved in a series of ventures in London's underground economy. These included part ownership of the underground press distribution service in the city...and an underground rock club (UFO)...on Tottenham Court Road.²⁴

It would not be long after the birth of *IT* that arguably the most famous underground magazine, *Oz* would appear. These would be followed by many other underground publications in both the capital and the provinces. Some were short-lived, others lasted longer, but none were as enduring as *IT* or *Oz*. The underground press explosion had begun, and for a few years would flourish and serve the counterculture before finally fading away in the early 1970s.

It is worth mentioning that around the same time that the British underground was emerging, a phenomenon largely publicised by the *Daily Telegraph* weekend magazine, and perpetuated by the mainstream media also came to prominence – ‘Swinging London’. The *Telegraph* article largely focussed ‘on a small, if highly visible section of (the) young: the rich, the successful, and the well connected’.²⁵ Nearly a year later, *Time* magazine hyped the ‘Swinging London’ image even further. It goes without saying that the picture projected by *Time* gave rise to one of the most enduring images, even if an overexposed cliché, of 1960s Britain. Rycroft argues that Swinging London was representative of a new,

...geographical shift in the centres of moral and political power. Old Tory-Liberal Establishment figures who ran the Empire from...Pall Mall,...and the influence of the City, Oxbridge, and Church had been surpassed by a “surprising new leadership community”...The locus of power was further west in Mayfair.²⁶

Time said it was made up of ‘economists, professors, actors, photographers, singers, admen, T.V. executives and writers’.²⁷ Rycroft argues that this new elite reflected the changes in post-war British society. He says ‘Many of them were identified as coming from provincial towns and industrial cities like Manchester and Birmingham, sporting their distinct regional accents like badges’.²⁸ It is here that parallels between the new ‘swinging’ elite and their underground counterparts can be drawn. The development of the counterculture and the underground was heavily influenced by

people from the provinces and even foreigners – particularly Americans and Australians. Some degree of interaction between the new cultural and political aristocracy of Swinging London and the nascent underground movement was inevitable, particularly in the London club scene. However, the underground was largely autonomous of the Swinging London phenomenon and to quote Nelson, ‘the swinging London scene soon became outmoded, and by 1967 was patently a thing of the past’.²⁹ Nevertheless, it is the ‘swinging image’ that seems to have become inextricably associated with 1960s Britain.

If it appeared for a while that London’s importance as the centre of activity, be it cultural or social, had slipped somewhat, it could be argued that the earlier influence of the provinces which shaped these new cultural, political, and expressions had declined by the mid-1960s. London had begun to absorb these provincial neophytes with their new cultural mores, and reaffirmed itself as *the* metropolis of Britain. The underground was no exception, and the relative ease with which the likes of Miles and so on had in adapting to London testifies to this. Therefore, it could be argued that their provincial roots were abandoned as they assimilated into London life and the underground community developed. The underground scene increasingly became more London orientated as the underground press became more concerned with metropolitan and global issues, or as Fountain said one of *IT’s* key aims was ‘challenging the dullness of London’.³⁰ This would largely be to the neglect of the provinces.

In concluding this chapter, it can be said that the youth explosion of the 1950s and early sixties, either Teddy Boys, Mods, Rockers, or CND, signified ‘the arrival of youth as a distinct, identifiable and self-assertive category in English society’.³¹ To further quote Nelson,

...each of these groupings, through their actions, gestures or belief systems, made clear their dissatisfaction with their own society, but declined (with the exception, in a limited way, of the anti-nuclear protesters) to consider ways of changing society, or to envisage an alternative society.³²

However, the emergent underground had different aspirations that pertained to both the ideas of cultural and social change. It has also become clear how the shift from 1950s anti-bomb protest and small literary magazines to sixties underground press was an obvious progression for the likes of Miles, Jeff Nuttall and so on. They would turn their literary attentions to a whole range of issues be they cultural, political, social, or anything else for that matter. It could also be said that, although the underground press would largely become centred in the capital it arguably had roots in the provinces – the regional alternative magazines and the origins of *IT's* founders bears testimony to this.

The next chapter will look at the individual publications, which are of principal concern here and provide the bulk of primary source material. It will concentrate primarily on the London papers *IT*, *Oz*, and *Friends/Frendz*, and to a lesser degree on the provincial papers *Mole Express*, *Grass Eye*, and *Styng*, and how the London underground viewed the provinces, as portrayed in the pages of its press, and vice versa.

CHAPTER TWO: ENDNOTES

1. Elizabeth Nelson, *The British Counter-Culture, 1966-73: A Study of the Underground Press* (Basingstoke, MacMillan, 1989) p.9
2. Nelson, *British Counter-Culture*, p.9
3. Jonathon Green, *All Dressed Up: The Sixties and the Counterculture* (London, Jonathan Cape, 1998) p.11
4. Green, *All Dressed Up*, p.11
5. However, by the late 1960s, although countercultural protesters, and the more serious political protesters were middle class, Nelson, *British Counter-Culture*, p.10, the underground did include a significant number of working class adherents, either as politically radicalised participants, or in terms of style, as mod fashions mutated into hippie mode, Roger Hutchinson, *High Sixties: The Summers of Riot and Love* (Edinburgh, Mainstream Publishing, 1992) p.71
6. Nelson, *British Counter-Culture*, p.31
7. Jeff Nuttall, *Bomb Culture*, (1968) (London, Paladin, 1972) p.47
8. Nuttall, *Bomb Culture*, p.181
9. Mick Farren and Ed Barker, *Watch Out Kids* (London, Open Gate Books, 1972) n/p
10. Farren and Barker, *Watch Out Kids*, n/p
11. Ibid., n/p
12. Nigel Fountain, *Underground: The London Alternative Press, 1966-74* (London, Routledge, 1988) p.6
13. Robert Hewison, *Too Much: Art and Society in the Sixties 1960-75*, (London, Methuen, 1986) p.95
14. Hewison, *Too Much*, p.95
15. Green, *All Dressed Up*, p.130
16. Hewison, *Too Much*, p.96
17. Nelson, *British Counter-Culture*, p.48
18. Green, *All Dressed Up*, p.150

19. Fountain, *Underground*, p.24
20. Green, *All Dressed Up*, p.128
21. *ibid.*, p.128
22. Fountain, *Underground*, p.24
23. *ibid.*, p.25
24. Simon Rycroft, *Mapping the Underground: Geographies of British and American Counter-Cultures, 1950-1975* (Unpublished PhD. Thesis, Nottingham University, 1993) p.126
25. Green, *All Dressed Up*, p.70
26. Rycroft, *Mapping the Underground*, p.117
27. *Time*, April 15 1966, p.30, in Rycroft, *Mapping the Underground*, p.17
28. Rycroft, *Mapping the Underground*, p.117
29. Nelson, *British Counter-Culture*, p.44
30. Fountain, *Underground*, p.26
31. Nelson, *British Counter-Culture*, p.36
32. *ibid.*, p.36

CHAPTER THREE

Emerging from the Underground: North and South Perspectives

Only a matter of months separated the first publications of *IT* and *Oz* in October 1966 and February 1967. *Friends*, later to become *Frendz*, would not arrive until November 1969. It would take all three publications some time to develop their own familiar styles. By Miles' own admission, *IT* was intended to be an 'international cultural magazine, to link London to New York and Paris and Amsterdam and so on'.¹ Indeed, it did begin by primarily covering cultural events, such as alternative theatre, literature, and so on, but even as little as six months after its inception, a change became evident after the first of *IT*'s frequent brushes with the law.² Significantly, after the raid, 'Mick Farren, whose relationship with *IT* was to survive the history of the underground, made his first appearance',³ bringing with him an increasingly street based culture of rock and roll, and revolution.

By June 1968 further changes occurred, *IT* changed ownership. Lovebooks Limited, which Miles and John Hopkins had set up, was replaced by KNULLAR Limited. Also *IT*, 'partly through (Pete) Stansill's interest in the possibilities of an alternative economy, and largely through Hopkins' enthusiasm, had triggered the birth of BIT in late May, which aimed to be an information service for the "community".⁴ Greater political activism was evident both globally and in Britain in 1968, and as this climate became more highly charged, *IT* accordingly seems to have become more politically aware. Whilst it continued to publish a diverse range of articles, a more hard-line, left-wing stance became more apparent. Events such as

the anti-Vietnam war demonstrations in Grosvenor Square were covered by *IT* in Britain. But *IT* was also interested in political events elsewhere in the world, such as the Paris barricades, the Black Power movement in America, the riot at the Democratic Party's convention in Chicago, and the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. Such events all helped *IT* to consolidate its claims as an international magazine. Farren reflects this global interest,

I was always something of a global thinker and was far more interested in what might be going down in Nepal, Cuba, Japan, Holland, and, above all, the USA, rather than events in Barnsley or Burton on Trent.⁵

The emphasis was undoubtedly now less on the cultural than on the political. The medium of rock 'n' roll and revolution were becoming far more prominent. This period is now generally regarded as *IT*'s highpoint.⁶ During this heyday, at the beginning of 1969, *IT* proudly proclaimed on its cover that it was selling over 40,000 copies and had a readership of around 150,000.⁷ The figures are probably not exaggerated considering *IT* had begun to reach the provinces. Also the increasing number of people who lived communal lifestyles by this time would have probably ensured that the pass on rate would have pushed the actual readership up considerably.

Having reached its peak in 1969, more changes occurred when some of the staff and readers dissented against the established set up, in which, ran the argument, 'a dictatorial, pontificating...elite had formed...divorced from the streets which had supposedly given it succour'.⁸ It appears that from this internecine dispute, the old guard had been pushed to one side.⁹ Now under the auspices of Mick Farren, *IT*'s increasingly revolutionary blend of sex, drugs, rock 'n' roll, politics, and anything else for that matter, was confirmed and would, more or less, characterise it until its demise. Sometime after the dispute the process of transferring the paper into the

hands of the staff was also 'finally completed'.¹⁰ Although maintaining a global outlook, *IT* had changed from a predominantly cultural organ to one which took on all aspects of the counterculture. *IT* would arguably remain the underground's tabloid whilst *Oz* would be its colour supplement.¹¹

The London *Oz* was first published in February 1967 by Richard Neville, an Australian, who had already had some success with an Australian version of *Oz* prior to his arrival in Britain. Perhaps influenced more by the 'Swinging London' scene than *IT*, *Oz* would eventually reflect the gaiety of Swinging London and psychedelia more than the other underground papers. Rycroft argues that 'If any faction of the underground could trace its lineage to Swinging London, it would be the **Ozniks**'.¹² It would take *Oz*, like the other London underground papers, a few issues to find its true direction and recognisable style. It initially started out using the satirical styles of *Private Eye* and *New Statesman*, but to little critical acclaim. The Day-Glo and psychedelic artwork, and innovative typesetting that *Oz* would become renowned for were yet to make an appearance. To quote Richard Neville;

The early *Oz*'s were an uncomfortable hybrid of satire, Sunday journalism and pirated Underground titbits. The artwork of Martin Sharp and the excellence of some early contributors saved the magazine from total calamity.¹³

By Neville's own admission, *Oz* did not start out as an underground magazine, or at least it did not regard itself as one until issue six.¹⁴ It finally went underground with the help of John Wilcock of American underground paper *EVO* and founder of the Underground Press Syndicate (UPS), who guest edited issue six.¹⁵

Out of all the famous underground publications *Oz* was the least serious and continued to mock just about anyone and everything, including the counterculture. For example, David Widgery derided the self-importance of 'Hippies in England' by saying that they 'represent about as powerful a challenge to the power structure of

the state as the people who put foreign coins in their gas meters.’¹⁶ No one was beneath being lampooned from Harold Wilson portrayed as ‘Toad of Whitehall’, to other political icons such as Golda Meir, Ghandi, Kennedy, and Ho Chi Minh who were portrayed in a mock ‘Wanted’ file for various crimes against humanity.¹⁷

However, despite its often irreverent nature and emphasis on fun, *Oz* could also produce theoretically eloquent, political pieces, for example Paris 1968 was covered as comprehensively as in *IT*, as was the Chicago Eight conspiracy trial.

Nevertheless, by early 1968 *Oz* had developed its own unmistakable style, which was largely visual and undoubtedly influenced by LSD, whilst its content was thematic. Many editions would deal with a specific theme; some examples being a Flying Saucer *Oz*, a Female Energy *Oz* (edited by Germaine Greer), a Crime And Conspiracy *Oz*, a Schoolkids *Oz*,¹⁸ and a Travel *Oz* (figures 2 & 3). The issue of travel was a way in which *Oz* covered various global issues. Travel, was seemingly covered more than in any other underground publication, again placing emphasis on the ‘play’ aspect associated with *Oz*. *Oz* was perhaps the most adventurous publication both graphically and journalistically, and its reportedly greater circulation than *IT* or *Friends/Frendz* was probably because of the wider range of readers it attracted, from school children to academics and intellectuals. The *Oz* editorial team estimated at the height of its popularity – or should that be notoriety – that *Oz* reached up to one million British readers.¹⁹ Finally, it could be argued that whilst *IT* appeared to take itself relatively seriously and became indignant about police and press harassment, ‘*Oz* ridiculed and exploited the enemy’²⁰, thus further emphasising the ‘play’ element that characterised *Oz* and was espoused in Richard Neville’s *Playpower*.

Friends, or *Frendz* as it would change its name to with issue 29 in May 1971, evolved from the English equivalent of *Rolling Stone* magazine which was promoted by the San Francisco parent magazine, as well as Mick Jagger. Not surprisingly in this earlier guise, music was the magazines top priority, but as Jagger's interest waned and the American backers pulled out, the abandoned staff, under the tutelage of Alan Marcuson – a university dropout from South Africa- established *Friends*. A new direction became apparent, and Marcuson says of the transition,

I wanted to do a magazine that was articulate, politically aware, more so than either *IT* or *Oz*...I thought you could take an underground magazine and make it acceptable to a wider audience.²¹

This is perhaps why *Friends* is sometimes considered to be the paper that was most likely to bridge the gap between underground and overground.²² However, resembling a combination of both *IT* and *Oz*, it also followed a similar pattern until it became more heavily politicized and particularly involved with the situation in Northern Ireland (figure 4). Nevertheless, relocating to Portobello road in early 1970 seems to have consolidated *Friends*' position as one of the top underground publications in the country, as it was now at the heart of the British underground scene. But the relative financial security that both *Oz* and *IT* enjoyed by the early 1970s was to elude *Friends / Frendz*, and the inherent contradiction between those trying to make some sort of professional success out of the paper and those advocating revolutionary overthrow of the establishment would eventually spell the end for *Frendz* in 1972. Despite allusions to being the link between underground and overground – where one might imagine a wider audience would be captured – *Friends / Frendz* never did quite enjoy the same popularity afforded to *IT* and *Oz*.

It has become apparent that all three of the London underground publications in question, particularly *IT* and *Oz*, viewed themselves as international organs rather

than being concerned solely with British issues. Even at a national level all three were more likely to cover events and issues that revolved around the capital. This is not to say that the provinces were entirely excluded, and *IT* especially appears to have devoted some coverage to the provinces, though this was not always complimentary. Despite its ever present claims to be an international publication - which it undoubtedly also was - '*IT* was of the three publications the most distinctively "English" in interests and character'.²³ This helps explain why *IT* did concern itself more with life in the provinces. Nevertheless, the earlier *IT*s were more preoccupied with 'happenings' in London. After all it was not until mid-1967 that *IT* began to sell copies in northern cities. Even then the more traditional Old Left papers which dominated the northern market would outsell *IT*.²⁴ It is hardly surprising then that *IT* would concentrate its efforts on the capital for its first eighteen months or so.

In *IT*'s event listings, 'What's Happening?', the initial contrast between how the city and the provinces were viewed becomes evident. Listings for the provinces were patronisingly headed 'In the Sticks' or 'Pastoral Scenes', whilst London came under the somewhat more interestingly titled '25 Hour City'. However, despite this somewhat condescending differentiation between capital and provinces, by 1968 there was a marked increase in coverage of provincial regions. This may have been in part due to *IT*'s improved distribution network which enabled it to reach the provinces on a larger scale than before. Greater access to information about the London underground scene appears to have influenced some provincial underground adherents to chance their hand in the capital. For example, Fountain describes how *IT* spurred Mark Williams of the Birmingham Arts Lab - which had been inspired by *IT* co-founder Jim Haynes' original Covent Garden Arts Lab²⁵ - to become involved

in the London scene. Similarly Ed Barker, having been ostracised by the Midland's Art Centre for his supposed underground lifestyle also found refuge in London at *IT*.²⁷ They became music editor and longstanding house cartoonist respectively. The aforementioned Covent Garden Arts Lab influenced many regional imitators, and *IT*, naturally enough, provided these provincial Arts Labs with a platform to report on their own activities and to publicise newly formed ones.²⁸ By the end of 1969, the original London Arts lab was in financial ruin, but publicity for provincial ones continued unabated.

IT would also cover other provincial aspects throughout its run. For example, it highlighted the cut-throat nature of the London music business, and the struggle many provincial bands had in making it without moving to London.²⁹ It also looked at the development of a counter-cultural community in St. Ives, and the problems it encountered from narrow-minded locals.³⁰ In another report, on the Black Country – somewhat critical at times – the reporter exhorted those in the provinces that if they could not form their own means of communication, to;

...GIVE US THE INFORMATION, THE NEWS, THE
CRITICISMS, THE THEORIES...AND WE, AS WELL
AS WE ARE ABLE WILL PRINT THEM.³¹

Indeed, for a while a trickle of reports on regional scenes in places such as Worthing, Brighton, Plymouth, Portsmouth, and Rochdale occurred, whilst Manchester's *Grass Eye* frequently sent reports down. Coverage of such areas was not always complimentary and both London and provincial writers were only too aware of the apathy and antipathy that sometimes existed in the provinces.³² *IT* could certainly be disdainful towards what were probably regarded as old backward ways associated with stagnant backwaters of conservatism. However, *IT* also showed respect to those from regional undergrounds who appeared to be attempting to break down the

rigidity of the provinces. If *It* appears to be ambiguous in its approach to the provinces, it must be said that it at least it covered them more consistently than *Oz*.

Oz might arguably be regarded as *the* London underground publication, as some of its obvious influences came from the more colourful and hedonistic aspects of the Swinging London scene. It rarely covered provincial issues, and when it did the articles were usually disparaging. In *Oz* 25, Danne Hughes reported on a visit to Scunthorpe and predictably portrayed the town as ‘small town England’. From its opening description of the town -

The Scunthorpe Hustle. We roamed a little. The set was international English-speaking, shopping suburbia. Pinball palace, Co-Ops, congregational church, ...non-residential Britannia pub...³³

- the article is condescending from beginning to end, through its description of ignorance and racism, to the boredom and mundanity of life in the town. The article only served to highlight the apparent gulf between a small northern town and swinging London. However, within two years *Oz*, admittedly, published a more sensitive article on Glasgow, and in particular the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders crisis. It appeared sympathetic to the hardship and poverty that many Glaswegians endured, and admired the dignity of Glaswegian working-people in such difficult circumstances. The article perhaps reflected the increasingly revolutionary hard-line prevalent among the underground – including *Oz* - in the wake of the Angry Brigade bombings, and, perhaps, predictably deduced that ‘Every problem that Glasgow has is symptomatic of cancer – the cancer of capitalism...’.³⁴ By this time, *Oz* was in a state of post-obscenity trial exhaustion and had changed editors. This change in editorship partly explains more sympathetic coverage of provincial issues. However,

even then it was usually left to underground writers from the provinces, such as Roger Hutchinson.

In its earlier incarnation *Friends* appeared to be more reticent on the subject of particular provincial regions but it ran an article entitled ‘Power to the Provinces’ which surprisingly supported Liberal party proposals to decentralise government by establishing twelve semi-autonomous regions. It concluded by saying; ‘It could be a very effective way to control land use and exploitation. “Strengthening regional pride” they call it. Another way of saying “Power to the provinces”. Fuck Whitehall’.³⁵ In its later editions, when it became *Frendz*, it did cover provincial towns more than before, and continued to run a sporadic column called ‘Provincial Poontangs’ that provided news and addresses of regional underground publications. *Frendz* also published a survey result of underground publications in Britain in 1972 (figure 5). But on the whole, apart from a keen interest in the Northern Ireland conflict, which was more of a political issue anyway, *Friends / Frendz* was more concerned with wider counter-cultural interests in the capital and abroad.

Apart from the obvious news, reviews, and coverage of events in and around the capital, the London underground press occasionally printed articles glorifying certain areas of the city. Notting Hill - which was regarded as the heart of underground activity in London, and possibly the role model for the rest of Britain’s underground communities – was celebrated in particular. The history of Notting Hill and its increasing underground community is covered with an accompanying map in *IT* 30,³⁶ (figure 6) and in one of the last editions of *Oz*, the decline of that same community is lamented by Dick Pountain who bemoans the liberal ‘gentrification’ of the area, which forced rents up and the bohemians out.³⁷ Ultimately though, it could be argued that as most of Britain’s major underground publications were produced in

London it is hardly surprising that the metropolis was of greater concern to them. Perhaps after taking their example from the likes of the underground press, the concentration on London issues inspired the likes of Roger Hutchinson and Chris Dixon to produce underground newspapers for their own areas.

Styng was a Barnsley based underground newspaper founded by Roger Hutchinson. Unlike many other regional underground papers *Styng* was fortunate in that it initially had a willing printer, and was able to capitalise on the Leeds – Sheffield college belt as a ready market. Whilst issues such as the ubiquitous *Oz* trial, and guerrilla struggles in Vietnam and Mozambique were dealt with at national and international levels, local issues also covered a wide spectrum. For example, the decline of Barnsley Market, bedsit accommodation in Sheffield, and theatre in the West Riding, to cases of municipal corruption and police brutality.³⁸ The authorities, looking for an excuse to close such a provocative organ down resorted to the charge that the London underground papers had frequently fallen foul of – the Obscene Publications Act. Hutchinson wrote of the authorities' 'heavy handed measures' in the suppression of *Styng* in *Oz* 37. He said,

Yorkshire... is unused to a full-time underground of its very own. *Oz*, *IT*, and *Frendz* are easily dismissed along with other mucky books from London. It is the concept of a revolutionary growth *within the county* that chills... more than *Styng*'s spontaneous use of 'fuck' and 'cunt'.³⁹

Although the charges never reached court and publicity had boosted sales to around 7-8,000, with an estimated readership of 35,000,⁴⁰ distribution problems, which were more difficult for provincial underground papers than the London publications contributed to *Styng*'s eventual decline in November 1971. Hutchinson later says of the distribution problems faced by the provincial underground papers,

Only in London, where the record company advertising executives lived, where Moore-Harness operated a non-judgmental distribution company...did the underground press find some longevity.⁴¹

The problem of living on wages out of a venture whose outgoings were barely covered by advertising revenue also contributed to *Styng*'s demise.⁴²

Prior to the demise of *Styng*, Hutchinson had made valuable contacts with people involved in the London underground press. This established a lifeline for Hutchinson, who would accept an invitation to assist in the running of *Oz* towards its end. Hutchinson did not entirely turn his back on the provinces when he joined the London underground press. He still found time to champion the provincial underground press, which he argued had been given,

new and vital definition...which works from a recognition of local identity and an acceptance of provincial function... (from) these nebulous reactions...lie an essential basis for media guerrilla warfare.⁴³

Contributing to this wider 'basis for media guerrilla warfare', across the Pennines in Manchester were the underground papers *Grass Eye* and *Moul* (later *Mole*) *Express*. But, as was so often the case in many other underground papers in the provinces or London, factionalism hindered their progress.

A mixture of people with 'radical cultural' and 'radical political' leanings would ensure that factionalism would be ever present within the Manchester underground scene of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Chris Dixon, *Grass Eye* founder, says of the factionalism,

Dave (Clark) brought the political analysis. I was quite apolitical apart from an antipathy towards the police... From the day he joined there was a non-stop fight between the hedonists and entertainers on one side and the very hard newsmen on the other.⁴⁴

After factionalism had effectively split *Grass Eye* by the end of 1969, a new incarnation emerged out of its ashes along with a new underground paper called *Moul Express*. Both the revamped *Grass Eye* and *Moul Express* were launched in May 1970. According to Dickinson the differences between the personalities that produced the papers were probably greater than those between the publications themselves.⁴⁵ But, as Mike Don of *Moul Express* emphasises, whilst *Moul Express* continued in the old style *Grass Eye* vein of left-wing politicizing;

Dave Clark's attitude had changed dramatically, and the new look *Grass Eye* had multicoloured pages, loads of articles on sex and dope and rock and roll, and very little politics whatsoever. So it had more or less upstaged us, in a complete change of style for them.⁴⁶

After initially outflanking *Moul Express* in terms of popularity and sales, *Grass Eye* foundered in September 1970. However, another *Grass Eye* news column was submitted to *IT* in October 1970,⁴⁷ and even as late as August 1971, ex-*Grass Eye* staff continued to write to *IT* publicising events intending to help pay off *Grass Eye*'s debts.⁴⁸ *Mole Express*, to its credit, after selling only 200 copies each of its first five issues as compared to *Grass Eye*'s peak of 5,000 by late summer 1970, continued to publish and maintained an overtly left-wing stance. However, its first issue appeared to target a diverse an audience as one might imagine, ranging from 'acid freaks', through 'skinheads', to 'vegetarians'.⁴⁹ On the whole, as Dickinson says *Mole Express* reflected 'a tougher much more political face of the underground than *Grass Eye*'.⁵⁰ Certainly, as time went on *Mole Express* would increasingly become involved with extremely radical activities, and certain people later implicated in the Angry Brigade conspiracy would produce two issues almost in entirety.⁵¹

This increasing shift towards revolutionary politics in the Manchester underground press at the expense of more cultural and hedonistic issues also

indicated a move to more localised community based issues, which in turn heralded a rash of new community papers. Although *Mole Express* continued to struggle on to 1973, sales had dropped to 1,500 a month by 1972, whilst 'on Merseyside the *Liverpool Free Press* was selling 6,000 copies a month. Community papers and the "politics you do yourself" had a future'.⁵² The internecine squabbles, printing difficulties, financial troubles, and a self-confessed lack of organisation had all conspired to damage the long term success of two of Manchester's more famous underground publications.

On the whole there appeared to be a belief by those in the provinces in the importance of the role that provincial underground papers had in contributing to a wider national network of underground information that could act as an alternative to the mainstream press. Also, there does not necessarily appear to be any constant animosity towards the capital or the underground scene in London, and although the London underground publications would ultimately remain more preoccupied with the capital and international affairs this did not make the London press any less relevant to the provinces. Farren recalls, 'In Penzance they also wanted to read about the MC5, the Paris Situationists...In many respects, IT, Oz, etc. were a definite cultural lifeline.'⁵³ Some provincial writers sometimes *did* use the pages of the London papers to show what was going on in their own areas, and criticism of the London underground press also sometimes become apparent. The naivety of London writers is highlighted by Hutchinson in an article on the Yorkshire underground press and radicalism. He said,

Richard Neville once quaintly justified his broader social conscience...by claiming he'd just spent the afternoon with *IT* working on ways to improve the lot of Nottingham mill girls...but you have to agree rapping with the editors of *IT* is hardly the best way of gauging the essence of existence of a 15 year old Midlands mill girl, let alone relating to her. The alienation shows in *IT*, as it has too frequently shown in *Oz*.⁵⁴

However, Hutchinson was also aware of provincial shortcomings; 'From the staunch Methodism of the Pennines to those grim remnants of the work ethic hanging darkly over the industrial midlands, the sticks undoubtedly reek of righteous conservatism...'.⁵⁵ In reality, the likes of Hutchinson were few, and Farren suggests that it is unfair to place all the blame on the London underground for its sometimes scant coverage of the provinces. He says, 'Any self appointed correspondent could pretty much get his or her stuff into print, but, in fact not many actually appointed themselves. Mainly they complained that we didn't do it'.⁵⁶

Irrespective of the neglect or lack of understanding sometimes shown by the London underground press towards the provinces, the London press still had an agenda which was inescapably concerned with aspects of provincialism, and ruralism to some extent. These concerns were usually related to the subject of alternative lifestyles within the wider counterculture, in particular the issues of pop festivals and communal living. In addition to an interest in alternative living outside the city, the London underground press was also concerned with aspects of urban life. The provincial papers also concerned themselves with issues related to their own communities. It is toward these issues that the next chapter will turn.

CHAPTER THREE: ENDNOTES

1. Miles, in Jonathon Green, *Days in the Life: Voices from the English Underground 1961-1971* (London, William Heinemann, 1988) p.121
2. The police raids and prosecutions carried out on the underground publications – the most infamous being the *Oz* Obscenity Trial would continue throughout the existence of the underground press. A separate study would need to be undertaken to fully examine this aspect of the underground press. For this reason, the harassment and trials of the underground press will only really be mentioned in relation to the decline of the underground press.
3. Nigel Fountain, *Underground: The London Alternative Press, 1966-74* (London, Comedia / Routledge, 1988) p.51
4. Fountain, *Underground*, p.68. BIT stood for Binary Information Transfer and was a central information point for the London area and also a prototype for other similar centres throughout the country. BIT circulated materials about activities and facilities throughout Britain and by 1971 received two hundred phone calls and twelve personal visits a day. Kenneth Leech *Youthquake: The Growth of a Counter-Culture through Two Decades* (London, Sheldon Press, 1973) p.129
5. Interview with Mick Farren by e-mail. See Appendix A, question 1, January 21 1999.
6. Fountain, *Underground*, p.173
7. *IT* 50, February 14-27, 1969, p.1
8. Fountain, *Underground*, p.85
9. Green, *Days in the Life*, pp.297-299
10. *IT* 96, January 26-February 11, 1971, p.2 editorial
11. Roger Hutchinson, *High Sixties: The Summers of Riot and Love* (Edinburgh, Mainstream Publishing, 1992) p.102
12. 'Oznik is a generic term, derived from the magazine *Oz*, broadly encompassing those who followed the editorial line of *Oz* by using 'play' as a form of protest or resistance.' Simon Rycroft, 'Mapping the Underground: Geographies of British and American Counter-Cultures, 1950-1975', (unpublished PhD. Thesis, Nottingham University, 1993) p.145
13. Richard Neville, *Playpower*, (London, Jonathon Cape, 1970) p.173
14. Neville, *Playpower*, p.173

15. The Underground Press Syndicate (UPS) was founded by the editors of six leading American underground editors, including John Wilcock in 1966, and it is the UPS which best exemplifies the global manifestation of the underground press. UPS members were free to use each other's material without copyright. Wilcock says of the UPS, 'All the information they got should be pooled; the only condition was that each paper was sent to every other paper, and that all could pick up anything they wanted'. John Wilcock, in Fountain, *Underground*, p.47. Initial membership grew from the original six to include over 200 publications all over the world by 1970.
16. *Oz* 6, n/d 1967, p.23
17. *Oz* 41, April, 1972, pp. 4-5
18. *Oz* 28, the School Kids issue, came about after the editors Richard Neville, Felix Dennis, and Jim Anderson placed a small advertisement in *Oz* 26, which read 'Some of us at *Oz* are felling old and boring. So we invite any of our readers who are under eighteen to come and edit the April issue... We will choose one person, several, or accept collective applications from a group of friends. You will receive no money, except expenses, and you will enjoy almost complete editorial freedom'. The ages of the nineteen or so selected ranged between fifteen and nineteen, and the School kids issue was, as Green stresses 'produced not *for* children, but *by* them, or at least the crew of adolescents who responded to Neville's ad'. Jonathon Green, *All Dressed Up: The Sixties and the Counterculture* (London, Jonathan Cape, 1998) p.363
19. Rycroft, 'Mapping the Underground', pp.168-169, '*Oz 20 years on*', BBC 2, 15.11.92
20. Hutchinson, *High Sixties*, p.102
21. Alan Marcuson, in Fountain, *Underground*, p.109
22. Richard Neville of *Oz*'s own ill-fated attempt to link the overground and underground press with the shortlived *Ink* is sometimes attributed with contributing to the decline of the underground press in the 1970s. See Mick Farren's comments in Appendix B, question 9, January 26, 1999.
23. Elizabeth Nelson, *The British Counter-Culture, 1966-73: A Study of the Underground Press* (Basingstoke, MacMillan, 1989) p.53
24. Rycroft, 'Mapping the Underground', p.127
25. The original Arts Lab in Drury Lane, Covent Garden, was set up with the intention of promoting counter-cultural experiments and other alternative artistic events. It had a theatre that could seat up to a hundred people as well its own cinema. It also had a café area and sold Underground Press Syndication publications. The Lab was usually open around the clock and had a very informal atmosphere.

26. Fountain, *Underground*, p.77
27. Bradley Martin jr. 'Black Country Blues', *IT* 69, December 5-17, 1969, p.5
28. The Cheltenham Arts lab was promoted thus, 'The latest Arts lab to sprout from these green and pleasant pastures is at Cheltenham, Glos. Things are still in the embryonic stage, but names of interested people are being collected at Rotunda Art Gallery, Back Montpellier Street, Cheltenham. Help it to have an early and safe birth...', *IT* 48, January 17-30, 1968, p.2
29. 'Rock in the Sticks: A Brief Glance at the Provinces', *IT* 64, September 12-25 1969, pp.11-14
30. *IT* 62, August 15-21, 1969, pp.4-5
31. *IT* 69, December 5-17, 1969, p.5
32. Hostile locals in St. Ives were referred to as 'very puritanical Methodists, who are about as far from Christians as people could be.', *IT* 62, August 15-21, 1969, p.4. Portsmouth is reported as having '...one of the highest rates of illegitimacy, suicide, and drug addiction in our green and pleasant land...It also has its fair share of slums and post-war carnage...For the unsettled youth of the city there is little to do but consume vast quantities of alcohol and drugs, and fight with each other merely to curb the boredom.', 'To see great Pompey Pass', *IT* 77, April 9-24, 1970, p.15. Similarly, Rochdale is criticised for its backwardness and lack of broadmindedness, as well as its industrial drabness, 'Yes, a snug town, but surly a smug town too. A town that's only now, and still quite grudgingly recognising the existence of the twentieth century. Still talking with pride of "Our Gracie"...', 'The great Aspidistra Mob', *IT* 82, July 3-16, 1970, p.15
33. Danne Hughes, 'Look out Scunthorpe', *Oz* 25, December 1969, p.31
34. Stanislav Demidjuk, 'What UCS?', *Oz* 31, September, 1971, p.4
35. *Friends* 19, November 27, 1970, p.6
36. Dave Robins, 'Notting Hill: The Three Villages', *IT* 30, May 3-16, 1968, pp.12-15
37. Dick Pountain, 'Greetings From the Gate', *Oz* 44, September 1972, pp.16-17
38. *Styng*, 4, 1971
39. Roger Hutchinson, 'Not so Much Oppression More a Way of Life', *Oz* 37, September 1971, p.7
40. Fountain, *Underground*, p.183, *Oz* 42, May 1972, p.38
41. Hutchinson, *High Sixties*, p.100

42. Fountain, *Underground*, p.183
43. Roger Hutchinson, 'Sledge-Hammers in the Slums', *Oz* 42, May 1972, p.40
44. Interview with Chris Dixon, London, October 1992, in Bob Dickinson, *Imprinting the Sticks: The Alternative Press Beyond London* (Aldershot, Arena, 1997) p.9
45. Dickinson, *Imprinting the Sticks*, p.13
46. Dickinson, *Imprinting the Sticks*, p.9
47. *IT* 89, October 8-22, 1970, p.5
48. *IT* 110, August 12-26, 1971, p.5
49. The full description of the target audience in the first issue of *Moul Express* ran in a continuous line along the bottom of every page. 'MOUL EXPRESS IS WRITTEN ABOUT BY AND FOR: ACID FREAKS, AGITATORS, ANARCHISTS, ANGELS, APPRENTICES, ARTISTS, ATHEISTS, BLACK PANTHERS, COMMUNARDS, CRIMINALS, DEVIANTS, DOSSERS, DRUGTAKERS, DROPOUTS, FLATEARTHERS, HIPPIES, HOMOSEXUALS, JUNKIES, MAD BOMBERS, MAGICIANS, MARXISTS, MOTHERFUCKERS, MYSTICS, PACIFISTS, PARANOIDS, POETS, PROVOS, PUSHERS, REVOLUTIONARIES, SCUM, SITUATIONISTS, SKINHEADS, SOCIALISTS, STUDENTS, TEN-TENS, VEGETARIANS. WE'RE NOT PUSHING A LINE. WE CAN'T ORGANISE YOU – ORGANISE YOURSELVES AGAIST THEM. WE WILL HAVE NEWS, MUSIC, POETRY, SURVIVAL AND THE PRICE OF POT. WE DON'T WANT A SEPERATION BETWEEN US AND YOU. WE ARE THE FISH IN THE SEA OF THE PEOPLE YOUR PARENTS WARNED YOU ABOUT. WE ARE THE PEOPLE YOUR PARENTS WARNED YOU ABOUT. WE ARE THE FORCES OF CHAOS AND ANARCHY.', *Moul Express*, 1, May 1970
50. Dickinson, p.26
51. *ibid.*, p.54
52. *ibid.*, p.69
53. Interview with Mick Farren by e-mail. See Appendix A, question 2, January 21 1999
54. *Oz* 37, September 1971, p.6
55. *Oz* 42, May 1972, p.40

56. Interview with Mick Farren by e-mail. See Appendix A, question 1, January 21, 1999

CHAPTER FOUR

Lifestyles: In the City or in the Sticks?

The underground press was undoubtedly one of the major mediums through which an alternative society and alternative lifestyles were promulgated: the commonest forms being communes - either rural or urban; squatting – predominantly urban; and pop festivals – either free or commercial. This chapter will endeavour to show how the underground press portrayed and promoted these lifestyles, in turn highlighting how various factions within the underground used these physical spaces to suit their own ideologies and beliefs.

The idea of communal living as a utopian alternative lifestyle was certainly not a new concept when the counterculture of the 1960s adopted the practice of communal living.¹ Earlier examples were Gerrard Winstanley's Diggers of the seventeenth century, Coleridge and Southey's dreams of an American commune in the eighteenth century, and Robert Owen's cooperative villages and communities, such as New Lanark in the nineteenth century to name a few. However, Leech argues that even before hippy culture emerged the idea of the commune had already been promoted in Britain in the 1960s.² Before counter-cultural attempts at communal living John Ledger's vegetarian society Ahimsa³, and its accompanying journal *Ahimsa Progress* provided the foundation for a breakaway group from Ahimsa led by Tony Kelly called Ahimsa Communities who founded the Selene Community in North Wales. It is sometimes regarded as the first commune of what would eventually become the official Commune Movement.⁴ Whilst Ahimsa Communities began to develop, various factions within the underground also began

to experiment. For example, the more hippy orientated English Diggers, under the auspices of Sid Rawle, advocated an eventual retreat into the countryside from established urban communes in London. On the other hand, the London Street Commune combined the more confrontational tactics of squatting with communal living in an urban setting and appealed more to the revolutionary ‘freaks’⁵ of the underground scene. The Commune Movement, as exemplified by the likes of Tony Kelly’s Selene community and its own *Communes* magazine was arguably more representative of an official commune movement. Despite some similarities with the underground it was also somewhat aloof from it. Although there was some cross-fertilisation with the counterculture, the Commune Movement’s endeavours were not apparently covered in the pages of the London underground press to the same extent as the Diggers or the London Street Commune, not to mention the efforts of an increasing number of smaller groups.

At around the same time as each other both *IT* and *Oz* ran articles about the English Diggers who were influenced by the first modern Diggers formed in San Francisco in 1966, who in turn took their cue from Gerrard Winstanley’s seventeenth century Diggers. *Oz* initially highlighted the latter day Diggers, and in doing so gave a glimpse of the direction which the alternative society might take.⁶ Soon after, *IT* carried its own coverage of the Diggers, and it became apparent that out of their contemporary urban roots the Diggers planned to colonise the countryside by establishing self-sufficient rural communities. An article by a Digger called Charlotte urged that,

...people must become self-sufficient. If we live off the remains of the affluent society we are simply parasites, we must grow our own food, make our own clothes, and gradually evolve a new society. I am not citing anything new or revolutionary. These are the facts. There is much common ground over the British Isles, which could be cultivated and communes built up.⁷

Whilst extolling the virtues of going back to the land and living in smaller communities where each person could feel they were an integral part of that unit the Diggers also realised the importance of maintaining links with London.

London, particularly the Notting Hill area, was subject to a large influx of hippies and freaks. The Diggers envisioned providing accommodation in the form of 'drop out pads for the large numbers of people hitting the capital looking for the mythical beautiful dream-boat. There should be places where people can literally hibernate for a while and sort out what they really want'.⁸ There was to be a transitional second stage, where houses would be provided so people could prove their commitment before moving to the rural commune by living constructively and learning practices useful for the commune. 'Moving to the country, buying a farm and land, cultivating common ground and starting a fairly advanced alternative commune' was the ultimate goal.⁹ A month later Sid Rawle re-emphasised that 'the (Diggers') main aim is an urban community out of which will develop a rural community at a later date'. He also said 'We have 200 active members, a mailing list of over 1,000 and strong ties with the Christian and anarchist groups'.¹⁰ Although the long-term success of such endeavours was not always reported, Sid Rawle did establish a tepee village in Wales in the 1970s, and also helped organise Windsor Free Festival and the annual Peoples' Free Festival at Stonehenge until it was outlawed in 1984.

In hindsight, some of the Diggers' aims might seem fantastically optimistic and somewhat naïve, and as Nelson points out,

The means of production in the Digger Love Communes would be automated; scientific and technological research would be conducted in order to 'easily flood the market with cut-price and free goods'; the profit-oriented 'hassles' experienced by the capitalist world would be avoided.¹¹

Such rhetoric was a part of the ethos of the times and was to a great extent ubiquitous throughout the underground. Although the spirit of the age dictated that people should be able to do their own thing, be it on a rural commune or an urban squat, it might be argued that despite all the talk about escaping the city and getting back to the land the underground was essentially more suited to the urban fabric of London. Rycroft argues that it was only the urban environment that was able to support the underground.¹² Maintaining the networks of newspapers, meeting places, and information centres vital in enabling the interchange of ideas so important to the underground would have been difficult both practically and economically if the underground existed solely as a number of isolated rural communities.¹³ To highlight this reliance on London the example of the *Commune* magazine of Tony Kelly's North Wales Selene community can be used. *Commune*, although not strictly underground, was concerned solely with rural issues and communes but it was still produced in London. The Commune Movement even held its main meeting in the East End in 1968.¹⁴ However, the admirable, if somewhat naïve, idealism of escaping back to the land was not espoused by all underground devotees, and some advocates of communal living emphasised the importance of living in the city. Gram, for instance, argued that,

Lots of groovy people are digging a rural scene and rushing off to plough the soil and eat the fruits thereof. I think this is cool. That is if you want to do it you should do it...But I play a different life – save the world before it's too late – we need the cities. We don't dig Notting Hill because it's crowded, expensive for rent, hot for fuzz, or the carbon monoxide in the air poisoning us. We dig it because our people are here – we stop being alone, persecuted freaks and become a tribe together.¹⁵

In *Oz* 39, Pat Meyer highlighted the benefits of urban communal living over rural communes by pointing out how so many rural communes seemed to fail as an alternative living arrangement because of lack of commitment and isolation. The natural setting for communes was cited as being urban, 'It is here that the largest number of people live, and the widest range of human development occurs. It is in an urban setting that a pattern of communal living can develop which is based on toleration for this wide range of life experience'.¹⁶ The idea that the underground was better suited to the urban setting is given extra credence by the preoccupation of underground newspapers with urban issues such as community politics and 'the street'. This is particularly true of *IT* and *Friends / Frenz*, and to an extent the provincial papers.

Mole Express took a particular interest in community politics, and in the words of Rycroft, 'Many provincial undergrounds were much more concerned to involve themselves in local community based politics than exploring new and exclusive forms of political expression'.¹⁷ In the case of Manchester, Dickinson argues that elements of the underground there tended to relate closely with localised communities, from tenants' rights groups to squats. This was especially true after *Mole Express* and *Grass Eye* moved their printing operation from Liverpool to the community based *Moss Side Press* which acquired a printing press in 1970. He further says that, 'this shift was reflected in a move out of the city and into the old,

traditionally working class zones in nearby, outlying areas'.¹⁸ This greater involvement in community politics became more evident in the Manchester underground press by 1971, and in July *Mole Express* was given considerable space in *Frendz* to air its views on community politics, especially in Moss Side.¹⁹ But, ironically, this greater interest in general community politics by the Manchester underground press may have led to its own decline as its encouragement of people at all levels of the community to become involved inspired the development of community based newspapers. In this sense, community papers often involved people who could not identify with, or would not have been sympathetic to the underground. Furthermore, greater involvement of what might be called the 'welfare professions', such as teachers and social workers became evident.²⁰ In the provinces it was becoming clear that community papers were beginning to outsell the more counter-culturally orientated underground papers by the end of 1972. Indeed, in 1972 Roger Lewis regarded the provinces as the future of the British underground press, adding, 'the recent development of community and regional papers suggests that activity is increasingly taking place at a local level'.²¹ This was further made evident by the seeming popularity of Manchester's community papers of the mid and late 1970s that had developed out of the underground press and survived most of the decade intact.²²

Although the London publications also had strong community links these were often in relation to underground enclaves such as Notting Hill. The idea of 'the street' and revolutionary community control appeared to have particular relevance for papers like *Friends / Frendz* and *IT*. The meaning of the term 'street' is, as Lewis says, difficult to define, but loosely speaking is representative of the activities and self-organisation take place in alternative communities all over the world.²³ Such

organisation involved ‘...free clinics, food co-operatives, legal aid centres, free schools, collectives, communes, health food stores, head shops...bad trip centres, tenants’ organisations and so on...’.²⁴ Even the majority of underground newspapers were distributed by street sellers rather than subscription or news stands according to Lewis.²⁵ To this notion of ‘the street’ the idea of community control is linked. This increasingly developed into revolutionary community control as the underground became more politicized over the turn of the decade. The more radical elements of the underground saw the city as an urban battleground in which to forward ‘the revolution’. Many aspiring revolutionaries realised the potential of highly concentrated numbers of people that existed in urban areas and sought to politicize young people by ‘exploiting street situations, creating spectacles like demonstrations, or through leafleting’.²⁶ Dick Pountain, in particular, extolled the virtues of revolutionary community control. ‘Revolutionary community control means total control of *all* the space, facilities and services of the “community” by the working class and their allies (and I mean *allies*, not fawning arse-lickers as some socialists would have us be).’ This reference to ‘total control’ also included ‘the streets, schools, shops, houses, entertainment...everything’.²⁷ In the next issue of *Friends* Pountain envisaged that in the absence of a fully developed movement of community control in England, or the USA and Europe, it would ‘probably be at least 10 years before a strong aggressive movement will be capable of seizing and defending “liberated zones” in the major cities’.²⁸ But as Nelson points out, the fate of rural areas was left unexplored by Pountain in his exposition of a predominantly urban based radical movement. It also failed to explain the way in which these ‘liberated zones’ would be seized.²⁹ Pountain did, however, stress the importance of the

London Street Commune in radicalizing the practice of squatting – another important aspect of community control.

Squatting enjoyed something of a renaissance in the late 1960s. In 1969, having revived the tactics used at the end of the world war two, the London Squatters Campaign soon attracted many people from the revolutionary libertarian left who regarded squatting as a convenient solution to the housing problems of the underground. Furthermore, squatting was seen by the anarchist left as both an attack on property and a means of creating an alternative society.³⁰ Hewison also argues how ‘the theoretical violence of the underground and the role of its press was translated into much more aggressive action as the libertarian call for the end of restraints made itself heard’.³¹ Squatting was at the forefront of this action, and it was clear that increasing numbers of anarchist squatters were coming into confrontation with the authorities by occupying and defending empty property, sometimes with weapons. In March 1969, squatters took over the Bell Hotel in Drury Lane renaming it Genesis Hall. It was going to be an extension of the nearby Arts Lab. Unsurprisingly, not least because of *IT*'s own links to Haynes' Art Lab, squatting was sympathetically covered in *IT* as well as the other underground publications. Shortly before squatting became a bugbear in 1969, *IT* ran an article highlighting the plight of the homeless and exhorted people to squat empty properties.³² By the time Genesis Hall was raided and the occupants evicted in March 1969 factional divisions had emerged within the squat - originally intended to be used an arts centre and hostel. *IT* reported that,

...a group of people who had moved into the building had a different idea: they saw the place as ideal for a libertarian Digger commune, and suggested that the real need for accommodation was not for artists, writers etc., but for the homeless non-creative people, the social derelicts, drug addicts, unmarried mothers etc. They opposed the £1 rent charge and the security of the Hell's Angels.³³

After evicting the squatters from Genesis, the Greater London Council rendered the place completely uninhabitable after the squatters had fixed it up. This was a mean act of hypocrisy that did not go unnoticed by the underground press, 'Unfortunately the official GLC attitude to this creative act of reconstruction was a little negative – the men in blue looked on as GLC workmen took delight in smashing all the windows and tearing up the floorboards'.³⁴ However, *IT's* coverage of the Drury Lane squat received criticism from some quarters of the underground after it had suggested drug smoking in squats might not be a good idea. *IT* commented, 'As the bust was directed against drugs rather than squat action itself, these cats, if guilty, must take most of the responsibility if the squat action collapses...'.³⁵ In April 1969 a meeting between certain luminaries from the Anglo-American undergrounds led to Alex Trocchi criticizing *IT's* coverage of the affair by questioning whether 'dope-free communes and tolerating authority (were) the right way to fight the system'.³⁶ A letter to *IT* from John Rety of the London Federation of Anarchists also condemned what he saw as hypocrisy on the behalf of *IT*. It read, '*IT* has devoted a lot of energy to the advocating of smoking marijuana or taking LSD. Now you are using the arguments of the establishment in trying to restrict the rights of the individual to do as he pleases'.³⁷ Ideological differences apart on this particular issue, squatting action increased and gained an even higher profile throughout 1969 when two more notorious squats, instigated by the London Street Commune, caught the imagination of the media. One was in Endell Street, Covent Garden, and the other at 144

Piccadilly. The hostility that the latter squat aroused among the establishment is not surprising. The occupation of a mansion on one of London's main thoroughfares by a collective of subcultures ranging from skinheads, hippies, freaks, and Hell's Angels under the spray painted slogan 'We are the writing on your walls', was suitably inflammatory to provoke a heavy handed police eviction.³⁸ Squatting had become a byword for degeneracy and anarchism, and was perceived as '...a challenge to society's most dearly held values. It called into question both the nuclear family and the work ethic'.³⁹ Nevertheless, squatting would continue to be an issue within the underground press throughout its existence. For example *IT* printed a guide to squatting and the law as early as Spring 1969, and *Oz* was still advocating squatting with a 'dos and don'ts' column in 1973 for which the sub-heading read,

ARE YOU SICK OF PAYING RENT TO SOME
THIEVING BASTARD WHO WON'T LIFT A
FINGER IN RETURN? MAYBE EVEN WORSE
YOU HAVEN'T GOT A HOME AT ALL. IF SO,
STOP LOOKING FOR A MOMENT READ THE
DOS AND DON'T'S OF SQUATTING BELOW
GET YOURSELF A HOME BEFORE SPRING.⁴⁰

As it was a form of alternative lifestyle, and because of its anti-capitalist and anti-establishment connotations it is hardly surprising that squatting was sympathetically covered in the underground press. But because of the siege mentality that squatting created, 'official' squatters would have difficulties as early as 1969 as an establishment backlash supported by the popular press became fully blown.⁴¹ The underground press countered the sensationalist reporting of the mainstream press, and was undoubtedly instrumental in providing a platform for advocates of alternative lifestyles. It also promoted revolutionary community control and the politics of the street, which were not necessarily confined to the urban landscape.

Dickinson says how, 'increasingly, the counterculture took "the street" with it for any of its larger gatherings'.⁴² These were usually pop festivals.

Pop festivals were usually seasonal events, which might be defined as celebrations of the alternative culture in which the whole spectrum of the underground could participate. Often set in the countryside, but not exclusively, they performed a number of functions for the underground. Nelson argues that, 'Festivals were an important means of developing and maintaining a commitment to the alternative lifestyle. They provided entertainment, an illusion of togetherness (even if not the reality), a kind of ritual where the believers could worship, fetish style almost, the new consciousness'.⁴³ Rock music, either commercial or underground, was a highly prominent preoccupation within youth culture and was probably one of the main things that united the various subcultures and factions within the underground, as well as mainstream youth culture. Clarke argues how,

Music was there to celebrate common areas of values: anti-authoritarianism, sexual relationships without marriage, drug consumption, togetherness. The pop festival became the venue at which these values and feelings could be celebrated *en masse* with the minimum of interference from straight society, without at the same time involving a total permanent rejection of society.⁴⁴

It was ideal for the 'weekend' hippy and the more committed freak alike, and was a means of creating an alternative society in microcosm, as well as an escape from the city - even if only temporarily. Farren sums up the escapist nature of festivals in *IT* when reporting on the first ever Glastonbury Fair - 'We didn't find God, but it was nice to relax for a few days and forget the problems of the city'.⁴⁵ The underground press had always been involved with musical events right from *IT's* early days when it became involved with large indoor benefits, such as The Fourteen Hour Technicolor Dream at Alexander Palace, and other 'happenings' at the UFO Club or

the Roundhouse. But as outdoor events became more common and larger, the capitalist entrepreneurs moved in on the festival scene making many of them large-scale commercial enterprises. By 1970, America had already witnessed Woodstock – the ‘love’ generation’s supposed high point - in August 1969, and Altamont its direct opposite in December 1969.⁴⁶ Britain, meanwhile, was attempting its own large-scale festivals, most notably in the form of the Bath and Isle of Wight festivals. Although the majority of people at these events unquestioningly accepted the extortionate prices and poor facilities, others within the underground were beginning to question the motives behind certain commercial festivals. Smaller non-profit making festivals began to develop, sometimes as a reaction to the commercial festivals, or as a means of raising money for an underground paper’s bust fund.⁴⁷ In 1970, *IT*’s own Mick Farren ventured into the world of festival organisation, but his attempts at organising even a small-scale festival highlight how difficult such an exercise could be. Phun City festival (figures 7 & 8), near Worthing was originally intended as a benefit for *IT*, and part of Farren’s publicity for the event stated,

The only British festival that isn’t run by HONKIES...
The problem starts when the honki who is happy to take the freak’s bread is far from happy to employ freaks. So the freak community fails to benefit...Phun City is being run for freaks, by freaks, without too much capital. Any profits will go back into the underground.⁴⁸

However, unforeseen circumstances and various legal difficulties resulted in the festival becoming totally free. Even all the performers who turned up agreed to waive their fees – except, ironically, a band called Free.⁴⁹ Nowhere was festival news more evident than in the pages of the underground press and *IT*’s review of Phun City was predictably glowing.⁵⁰ Despite such organisational hitches, Farren recently said, ‘Phun City and Glastonbury also proved that a festival could be staged on an economic wing and a prayer’.⁵¹ The example of Phun City perhaps also

renewed faith in many people disillusioned by the increasingly commercial nature of festivals and inspired the development of a free festival movement. Farren himself believes that the early free festivals, such as Phun City and Glastonbury had a great influence on the development of an alternative travelling culture that revolved around festivals and a nomadic lifestyle, and Hewison argues that the 'free festival' movement was born out of Phun City, albeit accidentally.⁵²

The discontent with profiteering commercial festivals came to a head in August 1970 at the Isle of Wight festival – the most publicised of British festivals in the early 1970s, and reportedly attended by 200,000 people. The presence of certain people, such as anarchists Danny Cohn-Bendit and Jean Jacques Lebel of the French student movement of 1968, and home-grown activists like Mick Farren and the British White Panthers made it clear that the festival scene had acquired some sort of political significance.⁵³ Demands for a free festival were achieved after two days when fences were forcibly broken down by those refused admission, supposedly spurred on by foreign anarchists, British revolutionaries and Hell's Angels. Prior to the storming of the fences, underground community bands the Pink Fairies and Hawkwind set up their own stage outside the confines of the main event and played for free to the considerable number of people refused entrance. These two bands would become a regular fixture on the festival scene where they would invariably play for free – Hawkwind are still a common sight on the alternative festival scene today. These spontaneous free happenings were often of greater interest to the underground papers than the main events. *IT* wrote, 'Some of the best music came from outside the arena: jam sessions with the Pink Fairies, Hawkwind & friends produced fine music, good vibes & most important of all, a sense of audience participation that was sadly lacking with most of the major acts'.⁵⁴ In addition to

their own coverage of the event, *Friends* reproduced diary accounts of the Isle of Wight festival, 'through the eyes of Hawkwind...and Pink Fairies'.⁵⁵

On the whole, the underground press was critical of the way in which the festival was organised, in particular the exorbitant admission fee, price of food, and also the heavy handed tactics of promoters Fiery Creations, who had erected huge fences patrolled by security guards with dogs. This proved a provocative enough challenge for the likes of the militant elements present (figure 9). Farren wrote of the hypocrisy that existed within the underground in relation to festivals,

The Isle of White Festival to me, seemed a practical demonstration of the way the wealth of the underground is at present distributed: a V.I.P. enclosure surrounded by fences and protected by guards; kids walking into the medical tent in a state of collapse because they hadn't eaten for two days; illustrations of a culture which, although paying lip service to the concepts of love & equality, manifests an inequality of rank & money as brutal as that of Czarist Russia.⁵⁶

Even *The Times* admitted that, 'money was at the bottom of the trouble' and sympathised with those who believed that music should be free, 'when one reads of the sums paid to some of the performers'.⁵⁷ But as Clarke says, although the militants at the Isle of Wight were not entirely representative of the entire audience, 'they did have their teeth into a growing contradiction between the commercial values of organizers seeking a profit and the anti-materialists, and cooperative philosophy which dominated the counter-culture'.⁵⁸ Undoubtedly, festivals were an important part of the underground, and were accordingly treated as such in the underground press. They represented an alternative lifestyle, if only for a few days, and served as a practical example of how alternative communities might become a reality. Nelson cites a letter to *IT* which said, 'Rock concerts and festivals drew large crowds not for the music itself, but for the sake of being; the music provided the

excuse for getting together rather than the reason for it'.⁵⁹ Festivals, therefore, brought all sections of the underground together and served as an escape from mainstream society where the values of the underground could be celebrated without too many restrictions. Music, although a central part of the underground lifestyle, was sometimes only incidental at such events.

This chapter has shown how alternative lifestyles were portrayed in the underground press, and has also examined some of the examples of alternative lifestyle to which the underground subscribed. Whilst some people still had aspirations towards a bohemian retreat from society others gravitated towards the revolutionary transformation of it. Admittedly, some of the more revolutionary ideas that had developed by the early 1970s do not sit easily alongside the ethos of 'love and peace', which was more prevalent in the early days of the underground press, but attitudes had changed by the 1970s and so had its press.⁶⁰ Either way, the ideological divisions began to take their toll on the underground and its press, and would help to contribute, along with other factors, to its demise.

CHAPTER FOUR: ENDNOTES

1. Communes and communal living in relation to the underground are referred to here in their broadest senses of the meanings, ranging from places called 'crash pads' where any itinerant hippy or freak might find an open-door and be able to 'doss' for a while, to the more organised attempts at communal living run on more socialist lines where responsibility is shouldered equally by all members of the commune. Efforts at self-sufficiency were also often attempted. According to Kenneth Leech, 'Unlike other kinds of commune, the crash-pad type has been devoid of any real goals, discipline or philosophy and the health and drugs problems are more than normally severe.' Kenneth Leech, *Youthquake: The growth of a Counter-Culture Through Two Decades* (London, Sheldon press, 1973) p.139
2. Kenneth Leech, *Youthquake: The Growth of a Counter-Culture Through Two Decades* (London, Sheldon press, 1973) p.138
3. An acronym for Agricultural and Hand Industries Mutual Support Association.
4. Leech, *Youthquake*, p.138
5. 'Freak' is an interchangeable term that can be used for hippy, but may also refer to someone of outlandish appearance, or who lives an unconventional lifestyle. Adherents of the counterculture and underground press often used it to define themselves, whilst 'straight' society would use the more common hippy. By the early 1970s as the politics of the urban guerrilla and revolution became more popular, the term 'hippy', with all of its American West Coast connotations of 'peace and love', appears to have become somewhat outmoded in the British underground press and increasingly replaced with the term freak.
6. *Oz* 9, February 1968, in Elizabeth Nelson, *The British Counter-Culture, 166-73: A Study of the Underground Press* (Basingstoke, MacMillan, 1989) p.74
7. *IT* 28, April 5-18 1968, p.12
8. *ibid.* p.12
9. *ibid.* p.12
10. 'Tribal Stirrings', *IT* 31, May 17-30, 1968, p.12
11. *Oz* 9, February 1968, pp.7-8, in Nelson, *British Counter-Culture*, p.75
12. Simon Rycroft, 'Mapping the Underground: Geographies of British and American Counter-Cultures, 1950-1975', (unpublished PhD. Thesis, Nottingham University, 1993) p.147
13. *ibid.* p.147

14. 'Commune-icate', *Gandalf's Garden* 2, 1968, pp.20-21, in Rycroft, 'Mapping the Underground', p.147
15. 'Tribal Stirrings', *IT* 31, May 17-30, 1968, p.12
16. Pat Meyer, 'Concrete-Jungle Kharma', *Oz* 31, December 1971, pp.18-19
17. Rycroft, 'Mapping the Underground', p.98
18. Bob Dickinson, *Imprinting the Sticks: The Alternative Press Beyond London* (Aldershot, Arena, 1997) p.33
19. 'Moss Side Divided', *Frendz* 5 (33) July 8, 1971, pp.12-13
20. Dickinson, *Imprinting the Sticks*, p.78
21. Roger Lewis, *Outlaws of America: The Underground Press and its Context: Notes on a Cultural Revolution* (Harmondsworth, Pelican, 1972) p.92
22. Dickinson, *Imprinting the Sticks*, p.93
23. Lewis, *Outlaws of America*, p.25
24. Lewis, *Outlaws of America*, p.29
25. *Ibid.*, p.23
26. Rycroft, 'Mapping the Underground', p.148
27. Dick Pountain, Poison Pen, 'To Change Masters is not to be Free: Dancing in the Street', *Friends* 22, January 19, 1971, p.8
28. Dick Pountain, Poison Pen, 'The Proletariat is Us. Long Live the Proletariat: Community Control', *Friends* 23, February 2, 1971, p.8
29. Elizabeth Nelson, *The British Counter-Culture, 1966-73: A Study of the Underground Press* (Basingstoke, MacMillan, 1989) p.108
30. Robert Hewison, *Too Much: Art and Society in the Sixties, 1960-1975*, (London, Methuen, 1986) p.164
31. *ibid.*, p.166
32. 'Squat', *IT* 49, January 31 – February 13, 1969, p.9
33. 'Spring-Crazed Fuzz try to Smash Genesis', *IT* 53, March 28-April 10, 1969, p.2
34. 'From Genesis to Exodus', *IT* 54, April 11-24, 1969, p.10
35. *IT* 53, March 28-April 10, 1969, p.2

36. Nigel Fountain, *Underground: The London Alternative Press, 1966-74* (Comedia / Routledge, London, 1988) p.85
37. *IT* 54, April 11-24, p.10
38. Hewison, *Too Much*, p.165
39. Steve Platt, 'A Decade of Squatting: The Story of Squatting in Britain Since 1968', Chapter 3, 'Setting the Stage. The London Squatters Campaign, Thuggery in Redbridge, the Hippies of Piccadilly, Licensed Squatting', in *Squatting: The Real Story*, 1980. The book is now out of print. But sections of it have been scanned onto the Internet homepage of the Advisory Service for Squatters. This particular chapter was sent by e-mail by the Advisory Service for Squatters in March 1999. The Internet address is <http://www.squatfreeserve.co.uk/story/index.htm>
40. 'Homeless - Why Not Squat?', *Oz* 46, January-February, 1973, pp.26-27
41. Hewison, *Too Much*, p.164, Fountain, *Underground*, p.85
42. Dickinson, *Imprinting the Sticks*, p.29
43. Nelson, *British Counter-Culture*, p.97
44. Michael Clarke, *The Politics of Pop Festivals*, (London, Junction Books, 1982) p.26
45. Mick Farren, 'Glastonbury Fair to Independence Day', *IT* 108, July 15-29, 1971, p.11
46. The Woodstock Festival took place in upstate New York in early August 1969, and is generally regarded as the American counterculture's zenith as an estimated half a million hippies united in show of 'peace, love, and harmony'. The Altamont festival took place four months later in California, and is usually regarded as a disaster. It is remembered for its violence - a man in the audience was killed by Hell's Angels whilst the Rolling Stones performed on stage.
47. A 'bust fund' was set up by underground papers after they had been raided or prosecuted by the police. Money raised from fund-raising events, such as concerts, festivals, collections, or direct appeals to their readership through the publication itself would go into the bust fund and help pay for bail, court costs, or fines, and so on.
48. Mick Farren, 'Is yours to make it', *IT* 83, July 17-30, 1970, pp.8-9
49. Fountain, *Underground*, p.117
50. *IT* 85, August 13-27, 1970, pp. 7-8

51. Interview with Mick Farren by e-mail. See Appendix A, question 3, January 21 1999.
52. Hewison, *Too Much*, p.187. Interview with Mick Farren by e-mail. See Appendix A, question 3, January 21 1999.
53. Nelson, *British Counter-Culture*, p.98
54. *IT* 87, September 10-24, 1970, p.8
55. *Friends* 15, October 2, 1970, p.7
56. *IT* 87, September 10-24, 1971
57. *The Times*, August 31, 1970, p.7
58. Clarke, *Politics of Pop Festivals*, p.41
59. *IT* 63, August 29- September 11, 1969, p.18
60. Interview with Mick Farren by e-mail. See Appendix C, question 7, May 2,1999.

Chapter Five

Fading Away

Before finally looking at the ideological divisions and some of the other factors pertinent to the demise of the underground and its press, this concluding chapter will begin by briefly summarising the relationship between the London underground press and the provinces. The intrinsically urban and global nature of the London underground press and the increasingly parochial nature of the Manchester underground press will also be reiterated

Although generally the London underground press usually showed a united front of solidarity despite various ideological differences and petty rivalries, the importance of the provinces and its underground press was never fully realised. Admittedly publicity was afforded to some regional underground scenes by the London press, but it seemed dismissive of the provinces in general. It took four years before the first British underground newspaper conference was held in Manchester. Even then, the London-based papers tended to dominate the conference. In an attempt to realise the need to ‘work more closely together...if the alternative society was to be a real alternative’, an agreement on ‘presenting a united distribution front and in setting up a pool of writers around Britain and the world’ was reached.¹ However, despite an increase in news on provincial underground papers in the latter years of the London underground press, the problems of distribution and lack of co-operation were never fully resolved. Despite an established global Underground Press Syndicate that enabled all members – including certain provincial publications – to freely use each other’s material it is

ironic that the London underground press probably had less interaction with the provincial press than it did with American publications. As Nelson says, 'the seeming absence of any really concrete bonds between the London underground papers and "scene" and the rest of England – was probably one of the more debilitating features of the English counter-culture'.² Essentially then, the London underground press remained committed to wider global issues and the capital itself. Whilst the London underground press inspired and, in some ways, mutated into specialist publications serving whole sections of society, such as gays and feminists, the provincial underground press, as exemplified by the likes of *Mole Express*, increasingly withdrew into their own communities and dealt with problems at a local level.

On the whole, despite frequent incursions into a rural setting, usually for pop festivals, or the supposedly more permanent arrangement of rural communes, the underground was more suited to the urban fabric, be it in Manchester or London. It was with urban issues that the underground press was primarily concerned. The rural wing of the underground with its concern with ecological matters, vegetarianism, and the like, 'looked somewhat bizarre alongside the praise of terrorism and exhortation to violent revolution'.³ The Underground press clearly found it hard to reconcile the growing divisions between sharply defined groups and loose coalitions, which had begun to replace a sort of consensus – albeit somewhat blurred – that had existed prior to the early 1970s.

By 1972, it is clear that the ascendancy of the underground press was on the wane – previous high sales of 40,000 to 50,000 for each issue of *IT* and *Oz* respectively had fallen to around 12,000 to 15,000 for *IT*.⁴ Arguably, in some respects, the drop in circulation could be attributed to the emergence of specialist

magazines such as *Gay News* and *Spare Rib* – the feminist magazine. Another factor, linked to the issue of feminism, sometimes debated in relation to the decline of the underground press was its sexist attitude towards women and indifference to the wider Women's Liberation movement. Although there had always been a feminist element to the underground press with both male sympathisers and the likes of Germaine Greer, Rosie Boycott, Marsha Rowe, and Sheila Rowbotham, the wider counterculture was, on the whole, male dominated. Admittedly there was an amount of coverage of women's issues. There was an *Oz* 'Female Energy' issue, a Friends Women's Lib issue – which two of the women later implicated in the Angry Brigade bombings helped put together – and listings and addresses of Women's Liberation groups were also published. Nevertheless, the underground press largely remained committed to sexism until its end. By the time *Spare Rib* was founded by two underground press staff, Marsha Rowe and Rosie Boycott in 1972, the male oriented underground press had missed its chance, 'to take serious account of the significance of its women, and more specifically of the ideological and organisational strength of the women's movement which owed much to its experiences both within the capitalist society and the counter-cultural challenge to it'.⁵ Ironically, it could be argued that although specialist and political magazines like *Spare Rib* and *The Leveller* took their cue from the underground press, they were also prompted because of its inability to adequately cater for oppressed groups, such as women or gays. Marsha Rowe says of *Spare Rib*, 'It was a daughter of the underground press. It was a product of the counter-culture and a reaction against it'.⁶ David Widgery, one of the more politically conscious writers for *Oz*, said of the decline of the underground press,

What finally knackered the underground was its complete inability to deal with women's liberation...men defined themselves as rebels against society in ways limited to their own sex, excluding women, except as loyal companions or mother figures...Because the underground remained so utterly dominated by men, sexual liberation was framed in terms saturated with male assumptions, right down to the rape fantasy of 'Dope, rock and roll and fucking in the streets'.⁷

On a more material level, coupled with the ever-present distribution difficulties that dogged underground publications, financial difficulties often brought about by constant police harassment and legal action probably also had some impact on the demise of the underground press. By the time of the most infamous of all the underground press prosecutions – the *Oz* Obscenity Trial in 1971 – all of the major London publications and some provincial publications had been busted at least once. Farren says that the harassment itself, '...made the underground press stronger. It focused attention, stiffened resolve, and tended to confirm that what we were doing was considered dangerous to the establishment'.⁸ But if harassment actually united the press, and garnered the support of the wider counterculture at various times, the actual prosecutions and ensuing court costs did little for the, often precarious, finances of individual publications. The underground press frequently had to set up bust funds to raise money for fines and court costs (figures 10). Although organising benefit concerts and festivals (figures 11 & 12) for such purposes might have been fun and part of the ethos of 'playpower', they were not always financially successful, as in the case of *Phun City*. Nelson argues that it is a, 'small wonder that with the feeling of the "heat" being turned on the underground with "busts" and trials for obscenity, as well as the almost frenzied search for something new upon which to anchor hopes, the underground turned with such apparent ease to the glamour of violence as expressed by the British Angry

Brigade...'.⁹ However, this shift arguably only created more ideological divisions within the underground press and served to undermine the underground even further.

The underground press, particularly *Friends / Frenz*, having already shown support for the Provisional IRA over the issue of the Northern Irish situation was now confronted with the Angry Brigade, who had taken the concept of revolution beyond the sloganeering and student demonstrations of 1968. Targets such as the home of Robert Carr - the employment minister responsible for the Conservative Party's controversial Industrial Relations Bill- and the police computer at Tintagel House were bombed. The underground press inevitably became involved when Angry Brigade communiqués were sent to *IT* and published in the paper. The almost ubiquitous police raids were now directed in search of explosives, rather than for obscenity. The general line taken by the London underground press and *Mole Express* was one of solidarity with the Angry Brigade and the people subsequently accused of conspiracy, but it is apparent that the underground became divided over the issue of the Angry brigade. The attitude of David May, an ex- underground press writer, sums up the polarity that existed within the underground press over the issue, 'The "Revolution", as preached by the Angry Brigade, I thought sucked. The overthrow of the government, of the state, was too heavy for most people'.¹⁰ Clearly, some of the underground press and the far left were opposed to their activities. When it came down to it, as Stuart Christie, one of the co-accused Angry Brigade conspirators, but later acquitted, points out, '...it was one thing advocating power out of the barrel of a gun in Vietnam and Bolivia, but not in Barnet...anything on their own doorstep was too near for comfort'.¹¹ Further polarity within the underground can be gauged by looking at letters to *IT*. This excerpt advocates direct action. 'If you stand back and wait for the first move to be made it will be too late...don't look

for your local Angry Brigade or any other organised groups – form your own-spontaneous demos, riots, street-happenings’.¹² Conversely, another stated, ‘Seems to me that the heavies who are trying to manipulate our revolution into violence are no better than Nixon, Heath, or for that matter Hitler... Today’s Angry Brigade, IRA, Panthers, etc., will be tomorrows Gestapo.’¹³ Today, Farren says, somewhat philosophically, ‘There was constant factional friction always. The Angry Brigade was no exception. Of course it accentuated the ongoing debate among the advocates of direct action and non-violence, but in practical terms we had to treat them, metaphorically, as another rock band looking to make their name’.¹⁴

By the early 1970s, the political and economic climate no longer encouraged utopianism.¹⁵ Increasing trades union unrest, strikes, the onset of recession, Angry Brigade and IRA bombs all conspired to put a strain on the underground press by the end of the 1973, whilst the wider counterculture was also in decline. In the last issue of *Oz* an epitaph for the underground was provided by David Widgery, who said,

The truth of the matter is not that The-Leaders Sold-out or that-something-greatly-beautiful grew cankered, but that the underground got smashed, good and proper, by those forces of which it stood in defiance. It was smashed because it could not, by 1968, be laughed at or ignored or patronised any longer. The underground was able to make really painful attacks on the systems intellectually based forms of power... Unlike previous movements of radical arties, it actually transmitted its mood of indiscipline to young people of all classes.¹⁶

However, on one hand, it could be argued that the potential of the underground as a real threat to the establishment was always going to be diminished because of the ever-present ideological divisions, and the increasing factional divisions had become too irreconcilable by 1972. Finally, on the other hand, more simplistically, in the words of John Lloyd, ‘...it was going to end anyway. People were going off into hard drugs, others going off into communes, some were just growing up and out of

it'.¹⁷ Perhaps then, the underground press was just a product of the times that reflected the ideologies of its various factions, and although the underground press in general was more suited to an urban setting –London's press was particularly concerned with events in the capital and globally - it helped to promote the alternative lifestyles that the counterculture strove for, both in an urban setting and a rural setting. Even if the 'revolution' of the alternative society did not take place on a wider scale, the legacy of squatting, communes and music festivals all remain. Arguably, this is due, in no small part, to the way in which the underground and its press embraced them in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

CHAPTER FIVE: ENDNOTES

1. *IT* 82, July 3-16, 1970, p.18, in Elizabeth Nelson, *The British Counter-Culture, 1966-73: A Study of the Underground Press* (Basingstoke, MacMillan, 1989) p.136
2. Elizabeth Nelson, *The British Counter-Culture, 1966-73: A Study of the Underground Press* (Basingstoke, MacMillan, 1989) p.51
3. Nelson, *British Counter-Culture*, p.51
4. Nigel Fountain, *Underground: The London Alternative Press, 1966-74* (London, Comedia/Routledge, 1988) p.185
5. Nelson, *British Counter-Culture*, p.140
6. Marsha Rowe, *Spare Rib Reader* (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1984) p.13
7. David Widgery, 'What Went Wrong?', *Oz* 48, winter 1973, p.66
8. Interview with Mick Farren by e-mail. See Appendix C, question 5, May 2, 1999
9. Nelson, *British Counter-Culture*, p.138
10. David May, cited by Jonathon Green, *Days in the Life: Voices from the English Underground, 1961-1971*, (London, William Heinemann, 1988)
11. Stuart Christie, *The Christie Files*, (Sanday, Cienfuegos Press, 1980) p.248
12. Letter from S.P. Noble, *IT* 111, August 26-September 9, 1971, p.2
13. Letter from J.Glenthorne, *IT* 119, December 16-30, 1971, p.2
14. Interview with Mick Farren, by e-mail. See Appendix C, question 6, May 2, 1999
15. Robert Hewison, *Too Much: Art and Society in the Sixties, 1960-1975*, (London, Methuen, 1986) p.177
16. Widgery, 'What Went Wrong?', *Oz* 48, Winter 1973, p.8
17. John Lloyd, cited by Fountain, *Underground*, p.214

APPENDICES

Apart from the correction of a few minor typographical errors this is a transcript of the e-mail interviews with Mick Farren conducted by Richard Deakin. The interviews took place between January 21 1999 and May 2 1999.

APPENDIX A. Interview with Mick Farren, Los Angeles, by e-mail, January 21 1999.

1. RD) What was the general attitude of those involved in the London underground scene towards those in the provinces?

MF) There was always a lot of talk at editorial meetings about the need to cover events in the provinces and, to some degree there was coverage of major centers like the Manchester Arts Lab and any spectacular drug bust. Also any self appointed correspondent could pretty much get his or her stuff into print, but, in fact not many actually appointed themselves. Mainly they complained that we didn't do it. I will confess, however, that, a lot of the time, we elitist snobs in the big city concentrated on how cool and groovy things were in London. For my part, I was always something of a global thinker and was far more interested in what might be going down in Nepal, Cuba, Japan, Holland*, and above all, the USA rather than events in Barnsley or Burton on Trent. I guess another form of elitism.

- * The connections, however, between London and Amsterdam and also Paris and (then) West Berlin were pretty strong.

2. RD) Do you think the London underground was as relevant to people in the provinces as it was to those in the capital?

MF) Yes, even though we tended to dis them. In Penzance they also wanted to read about the MC5, the Paris Situationists, Nepalese temple balls and Captain Beefheart. In many respects, *IT*, *Oz* etc. were a definite cultural lifeline. We also reprinted stuff like Crumb comics that were impossible to get in their original form outside of London. Remember, back then, we were the poker game in the country and the only ones writing about even fairly mainstream phenomena like (say) The Doors or Dylan on a regular basis. The NME and the Melody Maker, at that time, lagged far behind.

3. RD) What significance do you think free festivals, such as Phun City and Glastonbury Fayre had on the development of the alternative travelling culture that revolved around nomadic living and free festivals?

MF) They were the absolute start of the whole thing. Prior to the festivals, a few beats hitchhiked around during the summer but mainly headed for seaside resorts and London. The festivals really provided a focus for what you might call potlatch tribal gatherings or clan meets. Phun City and Glastonbury also proved that a festival could be staged on an economic wing and a prayer.

4. RD) In what ways were community bands like the Pink Fairies and Hawkwind relevant to 'freak' enclaves, such as Ladbroke Grove, or even elsewhere?

MF) The relationship with the "community bands" was highly symbiotic. The underground press publicised them, which helped it possible for them to tour and get record deals. They travelled around spreading the ethos and the demand for the newspapers and magazines grew and flourished for a while.

APPENDIX B. Interview with Mick Farren, Los Angeles, by e-mail, January 26 1999

1. RD) The *Observer* (24.1.99. p.6) reports plans to stage a 30th anniversary festival on the Isle of Wight next year, the IOW County Council having approached Richard Branson to organise the event. Being yourself inextricably linked to events that 'freed' the 1970 festival, what do you think about, as *The Observer* puts it, '...plans to lure the rock legends – and the old hippies – back for a bit of millennium nostalgia...?'

MF) Personally I think the 1970 IOW festival was a highly amusing disaster, and for the IOW council to want to commemorate it is highly ironic since at the time they did everything in their power to stop it. Also, of the musical highlights Hendrix is dead, Jim Morrison is dead, The Who retire etc. etc...Being a total hypocrite, I'd probably go for a laugh if someone sent me a ticket, but I'd file the whole plan under dumb and irrelevant.

2. RD) What are your views in general on the established commercial festivals of the 1990s? For example, what Glastonbury has become?

MF) The current festivals are what they are. Open air commercial show business, nothing more, nothing less.

3. RD) In *Watch Out Kids*, your vision of festivals and 'Tribes of super-nomads, musicians, artists, craftsmen, who can gather and spread information first hand', was somewhat prescient of the travelling communities and free festivals, such as Stonehenge, of the 1970s and early 1980s which constituted a way of life for many people. What are your views on the subsequent legislation against such lifestyles and events?

MF) Nomads have always been legislated against and generally scapegoated by settled communities, since they didn't observe either national boundaries or the authority of monarchs and government. Jews, gypsies, old hippies, it's all fundamentally the same. It's control v liberty, the great historical conflict. My only disappointment is that the current nomads didn't, to any great degree, embrace advanced portable technology, which would have given them a hell of an edge.

4. RD) How did the existing Notting Hill community react to the developing underground scene there, and to an increasing influx of hippies/ freaks etc. into the area?

MF) The Notting Hill area was an enclave of freaks, immigrants and bohemians long before the hippies got there. Check Colin Innes and beyond.

5. RD) Do you think that the underground press contributed to establishing places such as Notting Hill as countercultural communities?

MF) No...see 4.

6. RD) To what extent was there a sense of underground community solidarity within Notting Hill?

MF) Pretty damn solid, particularly among the freaks, and the West Indians (the ganga alliance). This even carried over into the punk era. Ref. The Clash.

7. RD) When methedrine use came to be seen as a problem within the counterculture didn't the underground press become involved in alerting the community of its potential dangers?

MF) We did, to a degree, warn about speed, but we also took a great deal of it. Try laying out a newspaper in 50 hours straight without it. I think the rants about heroin were more effective, but I personally was never in the "good drug / bad drug" business. What a person puts in their body for good or bad is their own business. Period. Ref. Bill Burroughs. All else is soul saving, and my hypocrisy doesn't stretch that far.

8. RD) Would you say Notting Hill was the British equivalent of Haight-Ashbury?

MF) Yes, but not as heavily marketed, thank god. Closer to New York's Lower East Side.

9. RD) How do you view the overall relationship between the London underground papers, such as *IT*, *Oz*, and *Frendz*?

MF) There was competition and rivalry, but, on the whole a pretty strong sense of solidarity. Things became really unglued when Richard Neville started *Ink*, supposedly an over-ground-underground link, which failed miserably, wasted a great deal of capital and energy, destroyed goodwill with printers, distributors etc. etc.' did untold damage, and made it ultimately possible for publications like NME to move into what had been underground press turf.

APPENDIX C. Interview with Mick Farren, Los Angeles, by e-mail, May 2 1999.

1. RD) Many British bands emerged from the art school scene of the early/mid 1960s, including the Deviants perhaps, but what influence did the art schools have on the development of the wider underground movement?

MF) The British art school system, now diluted beyond recognition, was an invaluable institution during the sixties. Most importantly because the entry requirements were so vague, you were virtually guaranteed a place in an art college if you showed any kind of potential talent, and academic scores could be waived. Thus they provided a safe haven in which all kind of malcontents, misfits and outsiders could flex their muscles.

2. RD) In reply to my first question on the 'general attitude of those involved in the London underground scene towards those in the provinces' (21.1.99) you mentioned a tendency towards 'global thinking', and how the 'connections ...between London and Amsterdam, and also Paris and... West Berlin were pretty strong'. Would you expand on the nature of these international networks?

MF) There really was no 'international network' per se, except for the Underground Press Syndicate under the terms of which, all underground papers mailed copies to all other underground papers with full and free right to reprint. Thus at *IT* we had the pick of stories from all over the world. Also the constant flow of travelers through the capital cities provided a constant organic link with all the stopping points on the hippie trail.

3. RD) In response to question 2 (21.1.99), 'Do you think the London underground press was as relevant to people in the provinces as it was to those in the capital?' you say that 'The NME and Melody Maker at that time lagged far behind'. What effect did the absorption of underground writers, such as yourself, by the likes of the NME etc. have on those papers?

MF) It revolutionized and radicalized these publications, particularly the NME, as far as was possible within a corporate structure. If nothing else, it set them up for their total embrace of punk in the late seventies.

4. RD) How did you find the transition from underground press to the NME?

MF) It was a drag and came with a definite sense of defeat. Loads of free albums and record company coke, but it was still working for the man.

5. RD) You indicated that things in the underground press 'became really unglued' (question 9, 26.1.99) when Richard Neville's attempt to link overground and underground press with the ill-fated *Ink*, allowed the underground press to be encroached upon by the likes of NME. Wasn't the effect of seemingly constant police harassment just as detrimental to the long term existence of the underground press?

MF) Police harassment, if anything, made the underground press stronger. It focused attention, stiffened resolve, and tended to confirm that what we were doing was considered dangerous to the establishment. Cooption of the more commercial functions and features was simply draining, both spiritually and economically and really sapped the will.

6. RD) The underground was always renowned for its libertarian tendencies, and the Angry Brigade also found a mouthpiece in the underground press. Did any friction within the underground press arise from this, and what was the general atmosphere like within the underground during this era?

MF) There was constant factional friction always. The Angry Brigade was no exception. Of course it accentuated the ongoing debate among the advocates of direct action and non-violence, but, in practical terms we had to treat them, metaphorically, as another rock band looking to make their name.

7. RD) *IT*, like other underground publications was always very eclectic in nature, but by the early 1970s, it appears to have adopted a more consistently revolutionary stance. Were the political beliefs of the editorial team and writers a main reason for this, or was *IT* merely reflecting a shift in prevailing attitudes among the underground.?

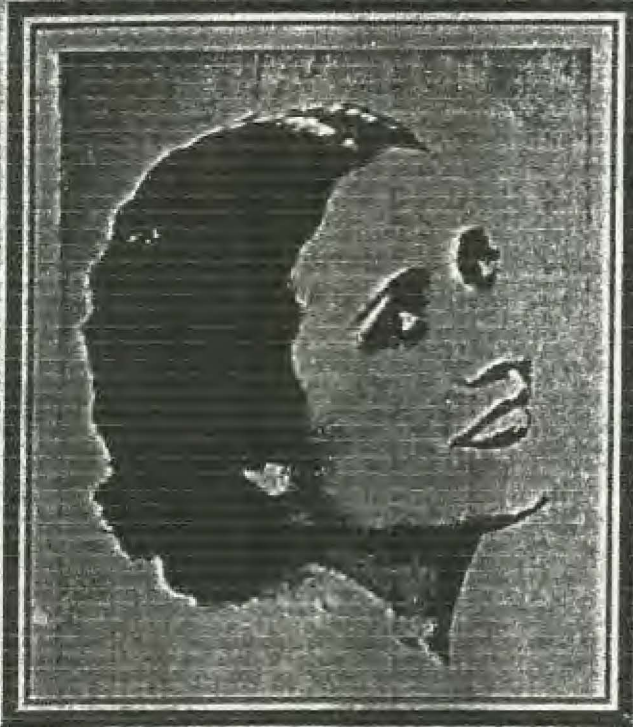
MF) It was reflecting the shift, perhaps not in the complete prevailing attitude but certainly that of those who gravitated to underground papers, either to write for them or who had an axe they wanted publicly ground.

8. RD) What for you personally did you find most gratifying about being involved in the production of an underground newspaper?

MF) Truthfully? My kick was to see *IT* on the news stands right next to *Playboy* and the *Daily Express*. The day the issue with the parody tabloid cover and the banner 'SCREWING CAUSES CLAP' went on sale was one of the happiest of my life. There it was, bold as brass, on the stands right by Oxford Circus tube station. Total absurdist street theatre and a magazine as well, Monty Python with fangs. (figure 13)

FIGURES

**INTERNATIONAL TIMES FIRST
ALL-NIGHT HAVE
POP OP COSTUME MASQUE DRAG BALL ET AL**



**STRIP TRIP/HAPPENINGS/MOVIES
SOFT MACHINE/PINK FLOYD STEEL BAND**

SUR PRIZE FOR SHORTEST-BAREST

**ROUND HOUSE (OPP CHALK FARM TUBE)
SAT 15 OCTOBER 11 PM ONWARDS
5 SHILLINGS IN ADVANCE TO SHILLINGS DOOR**

BRING YOUR OWN POISON

Figure 1: Reproduction of poster advertising the launch party of *International Times*.
Source: Mick Farren & Ed Barker, *Watch Out Kids* 1972, n/p



Figure 2: An array of *Oz* covers showing some diverse examples of the innovative artwork and design pioneered by the underground and its press.

Source: Richard Neville, *Hippie Hippie Shake*, 1995, inside cover.

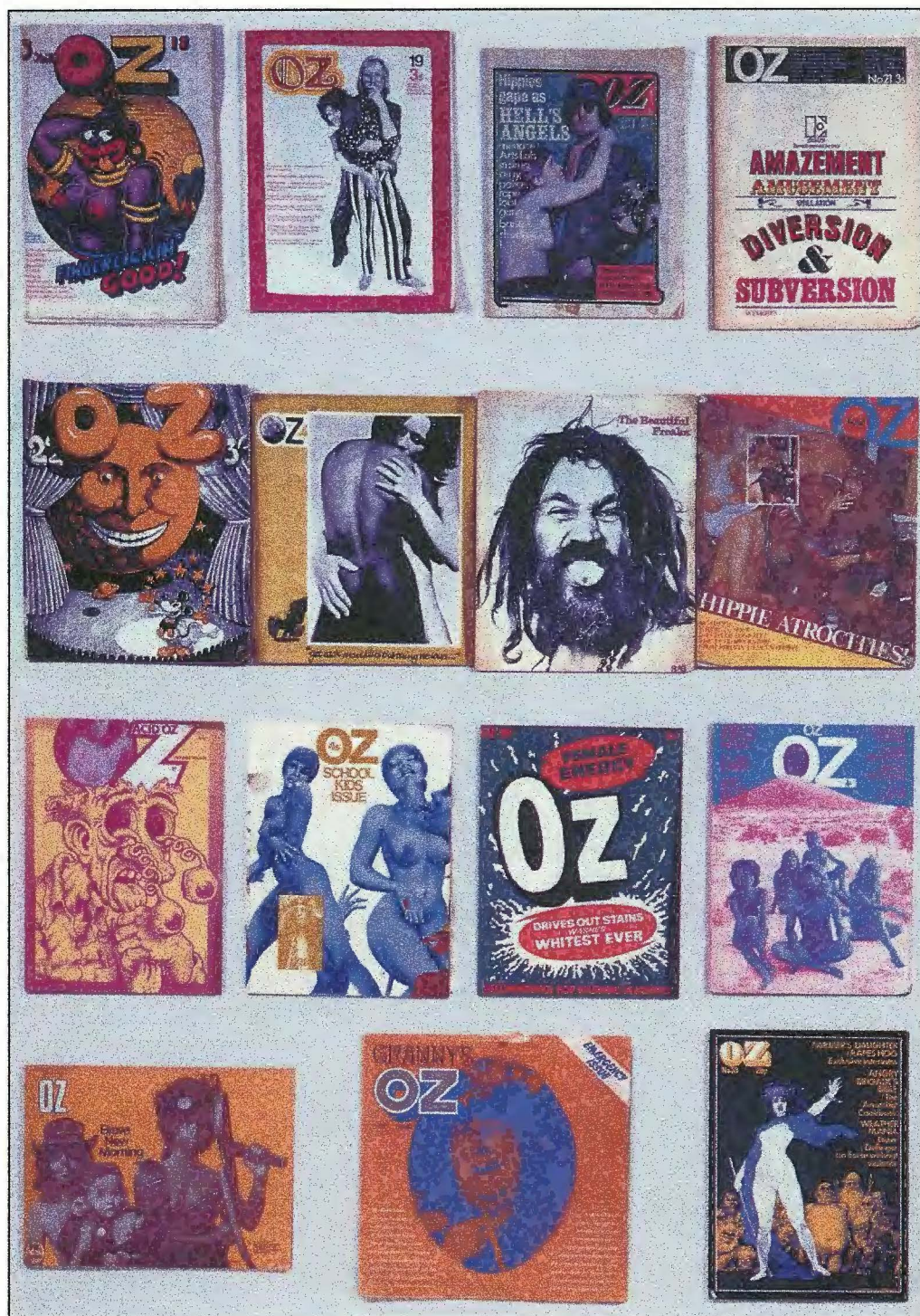


Figure 3: More Oz covers.

Source: Richard Neville, *Hippie Hippie Shake*, 1995, inside cover.



Figure 4: *Friends* cover reflecting the anti-British stance taken by the publication over the issue of Northern Ireland. *Friends* 25, March 8, 1971

Frenz Let us all read this issue with an open mind and a clean conscience.

PROVINCIAL POONTANGS

Many names are in *italics*, are marked as *unavailable* or *unavailable*. *Unavailable* is a subtle criticism of smaller alternative magazines. I use the word *unavailable* in the hope of the next issue of *Provincial Poontangs* being published in the same way. *Unavailable* is a subtle criticism of smaller alternative magazines. I use the word *unavailable* in the hope of the next issue of *Provincial Poontangs* being published in the same way. *Unavailable* is a subtle criticism of smaller alternative magazines. I use the word *unavailable* in the hope of the next issue of *Provincial Poontangs* being published in the same way.

1. *ACT UP!* 2. *ACT UP!* 3. *ACT UP!* 4. *ACT UP!* 5. *ACT UP!* 6. *ACT UP!* 7. *ACT UP!* 8. *ACT UP!* 9. *ACT UP!* 10. *ACT UP!* 11. *ACT UP!* 12. *ACT UP!* 13. *ACT UP!* 14. *ACT UP!* 15. *ACT UP!* 16. *ACT UP!* 17. *ACT UP!* 18. *ACT UP!* 19. *ACT UP!* 20. *ACT UP!* 21. *ACT UP!* 22. *ACT UP!* 23. *ACT UP!* 24. *ACT UP!* 25. *ACT UP!* 26. *ACT UP!* 27. *ACT UP!* 28. *ACT UP!* 29. *ACT UP!* 30. *ACT UP!* 31. *ACT UP!* 32. *ACT UP!* 33. *ACT UP!* 34. *ACT UP!* 35. *ACT UP!* 36. *ACT UP!* 37. *ACT UP!* 38. *ACT UP!* 39. *ACT UP!* 40. *ACT UP!* 41. *ACT UP!* 42. *ACT UP!* 43. *ACT UP!* 44. *ACT UP!* 45. *ACT UP!* 46. *ACT UP!* 47. *ACT UP!* 48. *ACT UP!* 49. *ACT UP!* 50. *ACT UP!* 51. *ACT UP!* 52. *ACT UP!* 53. *ACT UP!* 54. *ACT UP!* 55. *ACT UP!* 56. *ACT UP!* 57. *ACT UP!* 58. *ACT UP!* 59. *ACT UP!* 60. *ACT UP!* 61. *ACT UP!* 62. *ACT UP!* 63. *ACT UP!* 64. *ACT UP!* 65. *ACT UP!* 66. *ACT UP!* 67. *ACT UP!* 68. *ACT UP!* 69. *ACT UP!* 70. *ACT UP!* 71. *ACT UP!* 72. *ACT UP!* 73. *ACT UP!* 74. *ACT UP!* 75. *ACT UP!* 76. *ACT UP!* 77. *ACT UP!* 78. *ACT UP!* 79. *ACT UP!* 80. *ACT UP!* 81. *ACT UP!* 82. *ACT UP!* 83. *ACT UP!* 84. *ACT UP!* 85. *ACT UP!* 86. *ACT UP!* 87. *ACT UP!* 88. *ACT UP!* 89. *ACT UP!* 90. *ACT UP!* 91. *ACT UP!* 92. *ACT UP!* 93. *ACT UP!* 94. *ACT UP!* 95. *ACT UP!* 96. *ACT UP!* 97. *ACT UP!* 98. *ACT UP!* 99. *ACT UP!* 100. *ACT UP!*

Figure 5: *Frenz*'s survey of British alternative publications, printed in its 'Provincial Poontangs' column. *Frenz* 27, May 12, 1972, pp.20-21

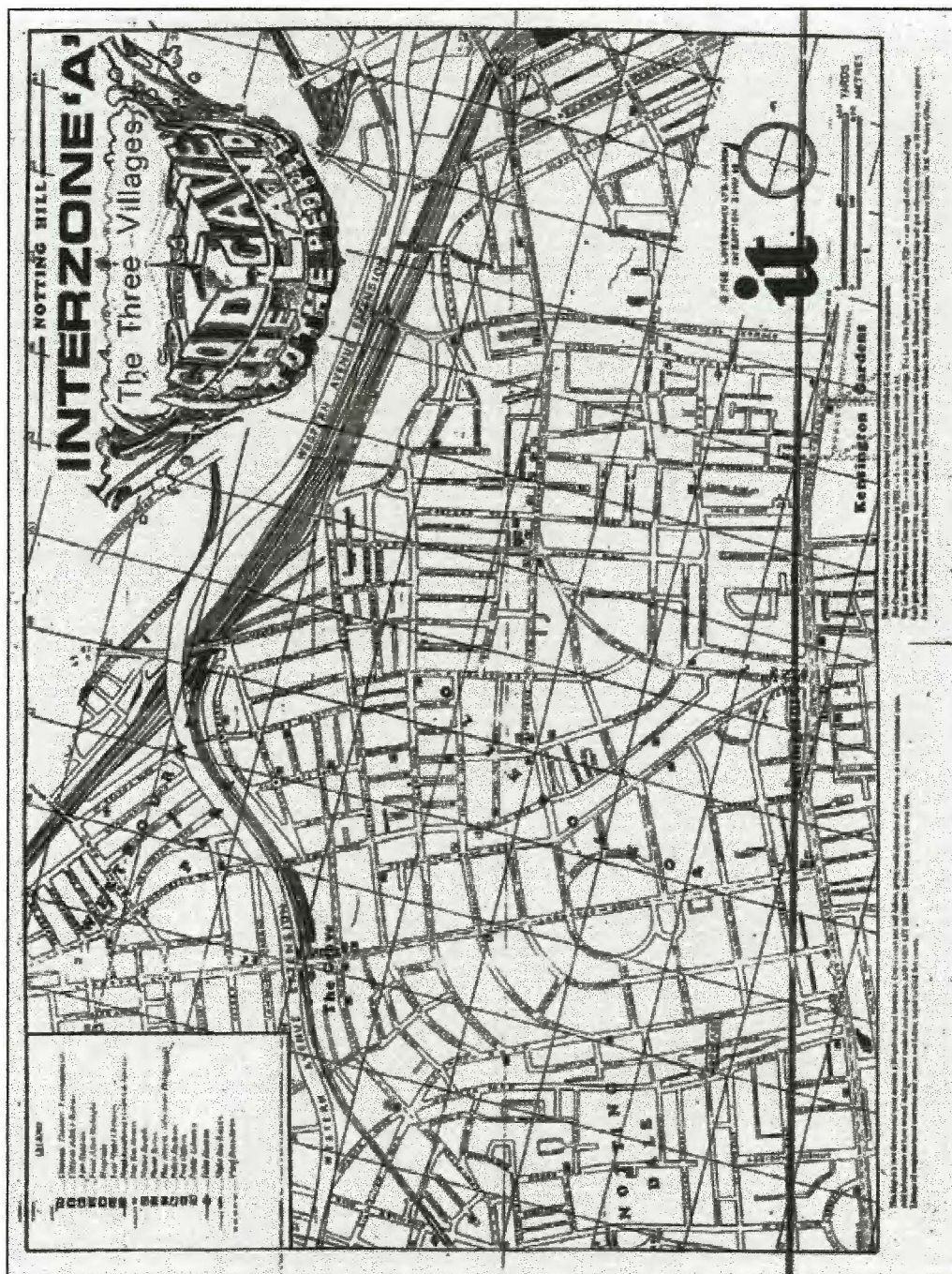



Figure 6: Map reflecting the underground's preoccupation with Notting Hill. Although somewhat blurred, the key highlights various places of significance to the underground community, such as all-night cafes, and neighbourhood centres and services etc. *IT* 30, May 3-16, 1968, pp.14-15



M.C.S.
FREE
MUNGO JENK
EDGAR BROUGHTON BAND
RENAISSANCE
PRETTY THINGS
THIRD EAR BAND
STEVE PERFORME TOOK & SLAGHAT
PINK FAIRIES
KEVIN AYRES & THE WHOLE WORLD
CLARK HUTCHINSON
MATTHEWS SOUTHERN COMFORT
MIGHTY BABY
HUMBLEBUMS
LEGG LARRY SMITH (A PERSONAL APPEARANCE)
FORMERLY FAT HARRY
MICHAEL CHAPMAN
J.J. JACKSON'S DILEMMA
NORM
STRAY
DEMON FUZZ
WILDQUATH
9 SURPRISE SUPER GROUPS
WILLIAM BURROUGHS
ALEX TROCCO
ROBERT CREELEY
TOM PICKARD
TOM RAWORTH
TONY JACKSON
STUART MONTGOMERY
LIBBY HOUSTON
MAL DEAN
MIKE & FRANCES HOROVITZ
BARRY McSWENNY
JEFF NUTTALL
BILL BUTLER
ELECTRIC CINEMA
CYDERESCENCE
CHRYSANTHEMUM
JEFF GENTER
JERRY FLOYD
ANDY CUMKLEY
SWIZZFRICKS
GIANT MUSHROOMS
IT
OZ
BIT
FRIENDS
GRASS EYE
TVX
RADIO GERONIMO

JULY 24 25 26
SCLERON COMMON, PATCHING
HEAD WORTHING, SUSSEX
ROCK FESTIVAL, ICEHOP GATHERING
GUILDEN THEATRE, SCL. II LOW
SHERE GRAND RUM, ELECTRIC CINEMA
NATONAL FINE ALL CHANGING
GIANT ESP - OFF MARKET
TICKETS - £2 FOR THREE DAY SEASON
£1 FOR ANY SINGLE DAY

FROM PHUN CITY LTD, 27 ANGELA ST.
LONDON WC2E 8BN
ONE STOP RECORDS LTD, DEAN ST, W.7
THE TRADING POST, WORTHING

PHUN CITY


© 1976 PHUN CITY LTD

Figure 7: Free at last! Advert for Phun City, originally an *IT* benefit festival – until it became what is generally regarded as the first ‘free’ festival. Artwork by the late Ed Barker, *IT*’s house artist and cartoonist.
Source: Mick Farren (ed.) *Get on Down*, 1976, p.63

IT 82-3-16 JULY 1970

it **25¢** **MC5** **DYLAN ALBUM**

FOR PHUN CITY
SPECTACULAR




Detroit rebels for U/ground Super fest.

AFTER lengthy negotiations, Phun City organizers have arranged for the legendary US revolutionary band MC5 to make their first ever European appearance.

Negotiations are also in progress to feature the first UK appearance of the **CRATEFUL DEAD** package show, which includes the Electric **CRATEFUL DEAD**, the **AMERICAN CRATEFUL DEAD**, The New Riders of the **CRATEFUL DEAD**, a country music legend featuring **JERRY GARCIA** on steel pedal guitar, & also **KEN KESBY & THE MERRY FRANKSTERS**.

If negotiations are successful, the package will finish the festival with a 6-9 hour set on Sunday night. *Cont on page 7*

GOING UP THE COUNTRY ?-A GUIDE TO SUMMER TR U&IN: DOPE NEWS: CRISIS ON DILLY: THE GREAT ASPIDISTRA MOB:



FURRY FREAK BROS. PAGE 7 →

Figure 8: Front cover of *IT* announcing the confirmation of revolutionary Detroit rock band the MC5 to appear at Phun City. *IT* 82, July 3-16, 1970, p.1



18 AUG '70
ANOI

WHITE PANTHER

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

I.O.W

BULLETIN ON ISLE OF WIGHT FESTIVAL

THE ISLE OF WIGHT FESTIVAL IS AN OBVIOUS
EXAMPLE OF CAPITALIST INTERESTS SEEKING TO EXPLOIT
THE ENERGY OF THE PEOPLES MUSIC.

THEY HAVE ERECTED TEN FOOT DOUBLE CORRUGATED
IRON FENCES AROUND THE MAIN ARENA AND MANNED IT
WITH DOGS AND GUARDS TO ENFORCE THIS EXPLOITATION.
THE FESTIVAL SITE HAS WEAKNESSES

a) THE FENCING WOULD NOT WITHSTAND A WELL
ORGANISED ATTACK BY THE PEOPLE.

b) THE ARENA IS OVERLOOKED BY HILL (NOT
PART OF THE SIGHT) FROM WHICH THE BANDS CAN BE
SEEN IN COMFORT AND FOR FREE.

THE PANTHERS TOGETHER WITH THE PINK FAIRIES
AND OTHER GROUPS WILL BE RUNNING A FREE FESTIVAL
ON LAND ADJOINING THE OFFICIAL SITE. IT WILL ATTEMPT
TO PROVIDE INFORMATION, FREE MUSIC, AND FREE FOOD.

TAKE PART.

POWER
TO THE
PEOPLE

Figure 9: British White Panther bulletin urging those excluded from the main Isle of Wight festival arena to storm the fences.

Source: Mick Farren & Ed Barker, *Watch Out Kids*, 1972, n/p

it BUST FUND

We have a lot of people to thank for their contributions to the IT Bust Fund since we opened it on January 1. It's been very heartening to see the cheques & postal orders trickle in, ten bob, a couple of quid, a fiver, from dozens of readers who want to help. Then there have been the proceeds of various whip-rounds at colleges and other places, and then the one or two bigish sums which have brought the Bust Fund total to a respectable £420.

The latest and biggest sum — £100 — has come from the Electric Cinema, Portobello Road, to whom all at IT send a special thanks.

If you would like us to be eternally grateful to you, too, all you have to do is send a contribution (nothing is too small) to the IT Bust Fund. Remember, conspiring to corrupt and debauch public morals can be an expensive business, and it's going to cost us £2000 whether we win or lose the case.

Figure 10: A typical small ad appeal for an *IT* 'bust fund'. *IT* 74, February 27-March 13, 1971, p.21

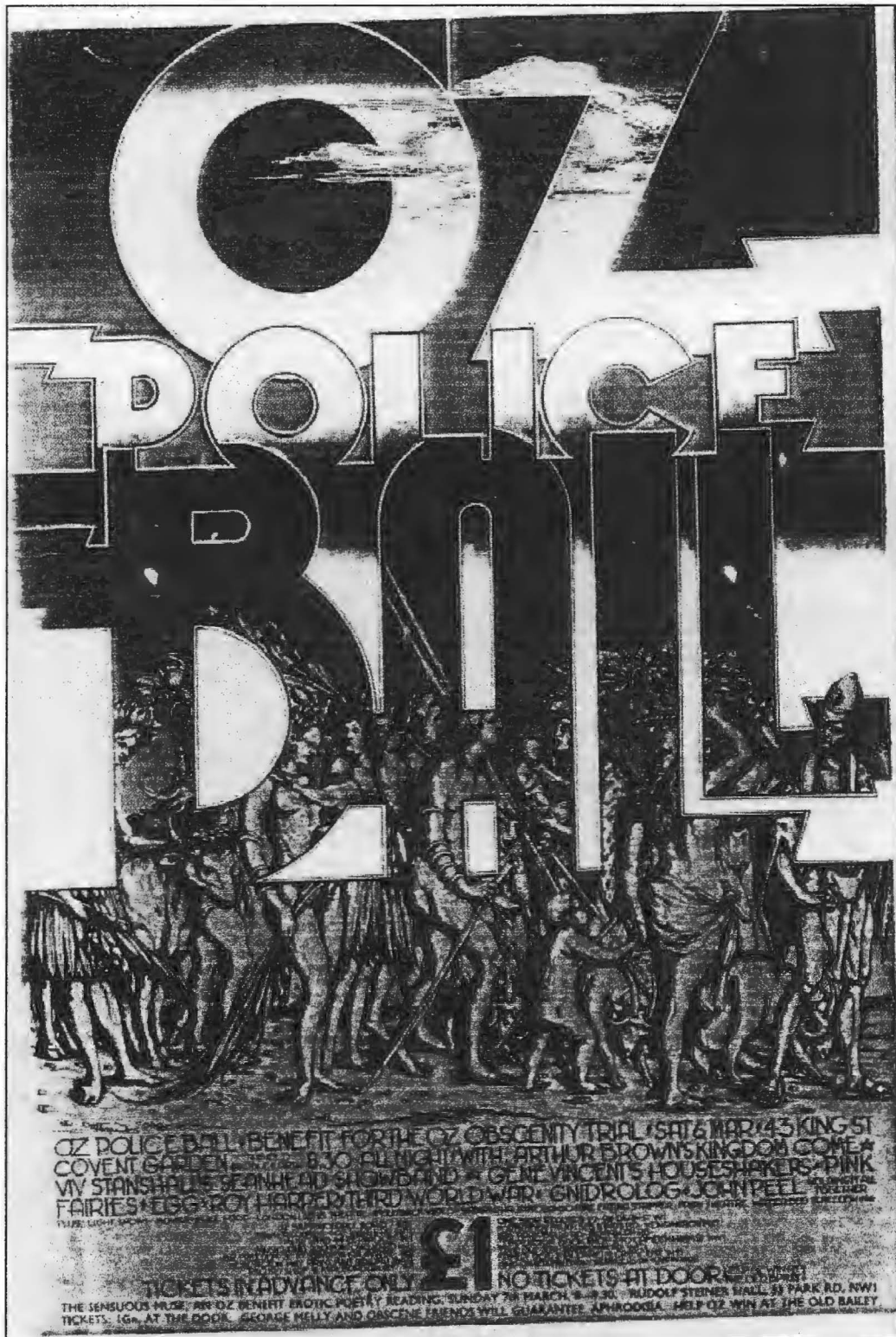


Figure 11: 'Oz Police Ball', benefit for the *Oz* Obscenity Trial.
Source: Mick Farren (ed.), *Get on Down*, 1976, p.54

IT/122 27 Jan-10 Feb 1972 Page 9

NASTY BALL

NO SISSIES! ALL WINTER!

A PARTY TO SUPPORT NASTY TALES DURING ITS FORTHCOMING "OBSCENITY" TRIAL

**HAWKWIND. PINK FAIRIES.
BISHOP'S BIG BOPPERS. LINDA LEWIS. SKIN ALLEY.
BLACKHEATH FOOT N DEATH MEN. SONIC 7.
BRINSLEY SCHWARZ. STEVE TOOK.**

£1 Wed 2 Feb. 9pm-6am. **BUMPERS**

COVENTRY STREET, LONDON W1 (Piccadilly tube)
plus FOOD! the stuff you love to eat! DRINK! the spot at 3.00 a.m. ROCK
FILMS! and other movies. EVENTS! all kinds of bizarre happenings are here
and for this event of the year.

"Be there or be square!" says the stinky old cat...

Figure 12: Advert for a *Nasty Tales* benefit gig – *IT's* comic offshoot - which was prosecuted for obscenity. Artwork by Ed Barker. *IT* 122, January 27-February 10, 1972, p.9



IT91 NOV. 5-19 1970 2S.

buy it
yer creep!



SCREWING-OFFICIAL REPORT

CAUSES

CLAP!

ANTI-SEX LAWS TO COMBAT PLAGUE?



TORY PIGS PRESSURE BLACKS & POOR ARE FIRST TARGET

TREATMENT OF GONORRHOEA AND SYPHILIS IS REACHING EPIDEMIC PROPORTIONS, ACCORDING TO RECENTLY-RELEASED FIGURES, AND IT WOULD SEEM THAT CLAP IS NOW SPREADING AT AN ALARMING RATE, AND WILL SOON BE FOLLOWED BY TORY LEGISLATION TO CURB "LICENTIOUS SEXUAL ACTIVITY".

CRUD

The figures show an increase of 24% in gonorrhoea cases in the under 20 age group, compared with 1968, and a 32% rise in illegitimate births to children under 16. Sir George Godber, chief Government medical officer, was quoted as saying: "There is clear evidence from figures of acute marital breakdown at younger ages that sexual relationships are increasingly common at these ages. The vaccination must be stopped - and stopped fast."

P.M. IN CLOSET

He has the full agreement and cooperation of noted poet Edmund Spenser (Hullo Duller!) Health and Tory MP for Hereford South, Sir James Forster, who is introducing a private members' bill to make it illegal for registered couples to indulge in kissing, pinching, or other forms of direct sexual activity. Mutual masturbation will not be affected by the new bill.

After only four months in government, the Tories are already pushing us up against the wall.

For 6 years, Labour pursued a chicken-shit fascism that, while pretending to be socialist, introduced a Dangerous Drugs Act, an Immigration Act, & a Special Powers Act, initiated a campaign against underground papers, & proposed to outlaw strikes.

Now the Tories have come right up front. Home Secretary Healding has put 24 members of the black community on trial for conspiracy to incite a riot (see inside). Foreign Secretary Horne plans to sell arms to the white South Africans (see page 4). Employment Minister Carr renounces Labour's proposals to make strikes illegal, & now Chancellor Barber's budget shows once & for all where the Tories are at.

Free milk for kids over 16 will be abolished.

while school meals are to go up - despite surveys showing that 35% of kids suffer from malnutrition. Prescription charges are to rise from 2/6 to 4/-, and will come by money dental charges will be half the actual cost - like maybe 2/6 for a few fillings. The rapid elimination of consumer science grants will cause a 15% rise in toll fares, while a reduction in agricultural support will mean that food prices will soar.

It's obvious that did in the pound off income tax will be no compensation to people on £750 a year or less, nor will a maximum income supplement of £3 from next August.

The only conclusion that can be drawn from their actions is that the government are attempting to return to the Victorian concept of Labour relations, in which a large pool of impoverished unemployed is kept as a constant threat to those with jobs. Can television, brought to a fine art by the Nazis, of mistreating ethnic or cultural groups as hungry men to divert the attention of the impoverished away from their own situation - You're better than them, you've been born with white skin, they explain.

Figure 13: Classic example an underground parody of the tabloid press. IT 91, November 5-19, 1970, p.1

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Gandalf's Garden, 2, 1968

IT 28, April 5-18, 1968

IT 30, May 3-16, 1968

IT 31, May 17-30, 1968

IT 48, January 17-30, 1968

IT 49, January 31-February 13, 1969

IT 50, February 14-27, 1969

IT 53, March 28-April 10, 1969

IT 54, April 11-24, 1969

IT 62, August 15-21, 1969

IT 63, August 29-September 11, 1969

IT 64, September, 12-25, 1969

IT 69, December 5-17, 1969

IT 74, February 27-March 13, 1970

IT 77, April 9-24, 1970

IT 82, July 3-16, 1970

IT 83, July 17-30, 1970

IT 85, August 13-27, 1970

IT 87, September 10-24, 1970

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Oz 2, n/d 1967

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Oz 25, December 1969

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