

# Other Scenes

John Wilcock

1969

NEW YORK—Marijuana smokers are “significantly more likely” to report attending happenings, reading underground newspapers and participating in mass protests.

That is one of the unsurprising findings of a study of young people made by a Michigan legislative committee. Chairman Dale Warner, a young hip legislator who hung around with John Sinclair and the MC5 commune people, produced a report that’s basically sympathetic to the benevolent herb. One quote, for example: “It is our impression that adults often know less about the subject than the adolescents do.”

Lower East Side types are all disclaiming knowledge of where the several thousand neatly-rolled joints came from (the ones that arrived in New York homes on St. Valentine’s Day accompanied by a heart-encircled fact sheet which declared that “marijuana is not habit-forming any more than are the movies”—despite the 200,000 arrests for possession last year). The anonymous donors promised that more joints would be sent out Mother’s Day “to persons selected from the phone books.”

Yippie Abbie Hoffman, sometime spokesman for the Tomkins Square community, says: “Wish we knew who did it; we never got any. My theory is that with all this pressure on tobacco that cigarettes will be declared illegal soon. They’ve already registered names like Acapulco Gold and Panama Red and now they’re looking around for ways to test new products.”

Ford’s Theatre in Washington spent thousands on the installation of hard-bottom seats, replicas of those in the theatre when Lincoln was shot, only to discover (after complaints from patrons) that asses are apparently not the same shape today. Red velvet cushions have been ordered.

DC’s radical newsletter *Mayday* (now seeking suggestions for a new name because *Mayday* has been previously copyrighted) says the Federal government is growing marijuana for “testing” purposes on Senator James Eastland’s Mississippi farm...

Senators Albert Gore and Everett Dirksen are feuding over whether the iris should be proclaimed the national flower. Meanwhile, Rome burns...The men’s john in the Supreme Court building dispenses watered soap...No news is Agnew.

Everybody’s into the movie thing these days, with techniques often getting more attention than the actual content. Montage or collage films, for example, are popping up on all sides with various methods aimed at the same results.

Two projectors with different films combine beautifully on one screen (Warhol, etc.) but you can also get the same effect in the processing (as John Chamberlain does in his “Secret Life of Hernando Cortes”). And you can even do it in the camera by rewinding the film back to a certain point and double exposing as you shoot a different scene over the first. Ed Seeman specializes in this method with his mind-blowing Frank Zappa footage (now being edited by Zappa for release in the spring.)

Universities were described as “mere trade schools for the military-industrial complex” by California delegates to a recent Peace & Freedom party conference at Venice. Committees were set up to study lowering the voting age, institute free public transportation and change the present penal system...

What killed Ramparts was its hang-up on glossy paper, full-color photographs, general extravagance. Ramparts' top brass threw money around from the beginning like a drunken sailor; on that budget almost any competent newsman could have kept the mag going. Ramparts' problem was that it always had more money than experience (or common sense) as became only too sadly clear when they had SF virtually to themselves during the newspaper strike and filled the gap with a sub-collegiate tabloid that nobody bothered to buy or read.

Who's behind the glossy mag called *The Plain Truth*? Right-wing evangelistic in tone, it's published by something called Ambassador College in Pasadena, also in England, Australia and aha!

Big Sandy, Texas. Slickpaper, four-color pix and claiming almost 1-1/2 million circulation, subscriptions are free to anyone who writes in to ask (P.O. Box 111, Pasadena, Calif. 91109).

William Buckley's right-wing *National Review* gave a glowing testimonial to Boston's *Avatar* which, unlike most undergrounds, says NR writer Anthony Dolan, is "patriotic"...

Sad that Bill Graham's Fillmore had to go the slickpaper route with his pocket-size program that looks like a replica of Broadway's *Playbill*. It could have been a creative product. But then one sees all the ads (20 out of 24 pages) and remembers that friendly Bill Graham isn't in this business to be creative, right?...Courses on belly-dancing, medical aspects of drugs, gourmet cooking, rock music, stained glass art, witch-craft, and communal living are offered by SF's Heliotrope (Free University) which adds that courses "generally take place in the warmth and comfort of the instructor's home...but they may meet at the beach, or in a tree"...

Latest newsletter from MGM/Verve records is by somebody signing himself "Phil Morris, Underground Publicity."



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Fifth Estate #75, March 20-April 2, 1969

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