

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Woodstock, NY

Personal Experience

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TIMOTHY LAPRESTA

Interviewed

by

Chris Helm

on

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TIMOTHY LEPRESTA

At the age of 45, Tim LaPresta has spent the majority of his life in the Youngstown, Ohio area. He brought a down-to-earth viewpoint of the 1960's and the Woodstock Festival of 1969 to the project. Tim was comfortable with a range of topics and well-versed in the social and musical trends of the era. He characterized the era as one of the protest and upheaval yet also one of cohesion, unity, and strength among young adults.

The interview immediately moved to the changes in the American society underwent during the 1960's. These changes, sometimes radical in nature, occurred from automobiles to the Vietnam War. Tim provided a number of valuable insights as to the social reasoning behind cultural changes in clothing, food, and music. He also eloquently described the intricacies of a strict upbringing and how it influenced his likes and dislikes, hobbies, and life decisions, including attending Woodstock in 1969.

More than any other interview, Tim LePresta provided a vivid portrait of a typical day in the 1960's. Ranging from household chores to letting loose with his friends, Tim lived as a typical respectful youth of the late 1950's, early 1960's. After receiving permission from his parents, Tim and his friends climbed in their 1969 Chevelle and left for New York.

Planning to see a large "battle of the bands," Tim LePresta carried few expectations with him to Woodstock. Once he arrived, he was immediately shocked at the immensity of the scene. His amazement continued as people continued to pour in. Although he did not realize it at the time, he came to comprehend the large social and cultural implications Woodstock brought. As a musician, he eagerly looked forward to Carlos Santana, Sly and the Family Stone, and Jimi Hendrix.

Tim LePresta believes that the entire event signified to the parents of America (including the

strict ones) that these youth were serious in their beliefs about music and politics. Woodstock gave the youth a chance to prove to the nation as well as themselves that a large group could get together and enjoy several days of peace and excellent music.

H This is an interview with Tim LePresta for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on the Woodstock Festival of 1969, by Christopher Helm, April 25, 1995, at 5 00 p m

Start out by telling us your name, your age, and where you were born

L My name is Tim LePresta and my age is forty-five I was born in Youngstown, Ohio, at St Elizabeth's [hospital] I lived in Youngstown most of my life

H What was life like in the late 1960's like for you?

L Everything was in an upheaval in the 1960's, the dress code of schools, the general attitude of the teenager. The music was in an upheaval It was in a transition state from the 1950's It just seemed like everything was in metamorphosis. It was definitely taking a change

H How so?

L. We go from the Chuck Berry type music to the Beatles on their "Sergeant Pepper" album, which freaked everybody out Nobody every heard of a sitar Bass is something weird in this music You do not know what is going. The older people labeled it as acid music because they did not like it We thought, "It is ours It is something different " There was no longer anymore of the "true" ballad music. It was more or less folklore going to softer music

There was a lot of protesting in the 1960's and the music reflected that as well The Grateful Dead had protest songs. The Buffalo Spring Field had protest songs A lot of people who thought they could reach their populous (the people that would follow them) by putting out the protest song of the time Because of the Vietnam conflict there were protest songs and because of the way the United States Government would say to the younger people, "We understood it as a deterioration of the United States by sending the young people over by the thousands to Vietnam where we had no business." It was a tough time There was a lot of changes going on The changes from automobiles, let us say, from the 1950's rounded fenders to the 1960's point jagged and everything, more chrome, hotter engines

This was a time for dramatic changes in everybody's life. It was like, "Okay United States, get ready because we have to keep up with the competition " That is more or less what it was. They knew that Japan would soon be competitors to them. They knew the European market would soon be a competition to them, so they had to try their last effort to try and produce something that would be attractive to the American populous; bell-bottom pants with the hip hugger waist, the Nehru collar on the shirts and jackets Some of the stuff that was brought to the United States was still accepted because it was radical dress It was something that showed change as well

My age adapted to it very easily because first of all it was attractive, and second of all it was comfortable Polyester was the greatest thing that ever hit the world because it held

a crease and did not really show the dirt that well. The food also styles have changed. When we were in that era, fast food was becoming more popular instead of saying, "Well, we will carry something with us in a lunch box, and if we get hungry we will stop and munch down." It was like, "Wow, let's go to this new fast food restaurant. Hamburgers are only twelve cents. We can muster that up." Gasoline was only 48 cents a gallon, so we could go anywhere we wanted.

H In your life in particular, what was a typical day like for you?

L At the time, I had a very strict father and a very concerned, overly loving mother. They were the type that if you get into trouble, you tell them that you are somebody else and do not come home because there is no home here for you. They would tease me about that, but they meant in a way to say, "Look, keep your name straight. Keep on the up and up, stay out of trouble, and we do not expect you to be in any trouble. Take care of yourself."

They trusted me because I have shown them that through the years I had developed a trust in them. When I mentioned that I was going to make a trip to upstate New York, they asked me whom I was going with. I told them I am going with a couple of friends from school and around our neighborhood, "We are going to go up there for a few days and come back." They asked, "Do you have enough money?" I said, "Yes, I have enough money." They asked, "Are you going to need any clothing or anything?" I said, "I am going to take a knapsack of clothing and different changes [of clothes]." They asked, "Are you going to be all right?" "Yes, I am going to be all right. Please allow me to grow up."

A typical day for me was I would get up, fix my own breakfast, get myself ready for school, and gather my books. Sometimes I would be allowed to use the car and sometimes I would not. If I would not, I would jump on the bus. If I would, I would have to drive to and from school, no place else. After I got home, I was not allowed to throw my books in the corner. I had to spend an hour and a half doing homework after I got home from school. Then after homework was dinner, and after dinner came the chores: feed the dog, clean up around the house, and maybe watch a couple hours of television. If I was fast enough with my homework, that is. I also had brothers and sisters and they were also required to do the same thing. Such was a typical day.

On Saturdays, that was when I knew half of that day was mine and mine alone. The beginning of the half, was my mom and dad's. The chores of deep cleaning had to be done in the house, like: scrubbing the downstairs floor, taking out the trash from the incinerator, feeding the dog, weeding the garden, cutting the grass, whatever particular item of those needed done, cleaning the windows in the house. Like I said, each of us had their own chores, I was not alone. My oldest brother had it the worst, he had to wax the hardwood floors.

H So you are getting your stuff ready to go, so what were your expectations at that time?

L I had no idea. It is like trying to stereotype something you have never been to with something that you can relate to. What I mean is, you fix a picture in your mind of

something that you have been through of something that you thought was really the best that you have ever seen. Being in music at the time, having my own band, we would travel different places and see really good bands and been in battle of the bands. I am thinking, "This is going to be like a major battle of the bands, and we get to sit back and watch it instead of participate in it." I missed the whole philosophical key of what was happening at the time, but as I look back on it having experienced it, I could say that it slowly sank in a couple years at a time later, as to what the meaning of all this gathering was about.

Then thinking of it, I have never seen some of these bands. Everybody talked about them. I have heard them on the radio or the record. I loved the music, absolutely fantastic. I was excited to go see how this music was put together. Picturesque, I did not know whether we would be in an auditorium, I did not know whether we would be in an outside amphitheater. I did not know kind of situation we were going to be in. I had never seen anything like this. When we did finally get there, I was just too overwhelmed. I looked at the stage in the air. I am looking and I am saying, "Are they going to build something here? What is all that scaffolding?" I had no concept at all, that those people would be up there. That would be because we were so far away, that they had to project the sound.

H How did you get there?

L We all took up a collection for gas. A couple of us had motorbikes. I did not, but I rode with a friend of mine. He had a Sixty-nine Chevelle. I will tell you, this was a screamer. We all made plans, that if this thing was so big, and somebody got lost, we either had to make an announcement to meet at a certain area or we would have to look for some sort of sign. Like tying a red string on a gate or something like that. As we pulled up into this area it seemed like it was opened, no fences, no nothing. I am thinking, "What am I supposed to do, throw dirt in the air? My God, look at all of these people." At that time, there was about five, ten or fifteen thousand people. Behind me, on the sides of me, people were just coming in like a herd of animals. We kind of held close to each other and said, "Let's get in and out of the mainstream before we separate." It took us about a whole day to relax. To say, "I am going over to this area and listen to the music or I am going to go over to this area and see what is going on." It took a whole day to relax because none of us had seen a crowd of people of that size.

H What day did you get there?

L It was the first day and it was an afternoon. It was a sunny hot day, surprisingly, of the rest of the weather that was there. It was a nice warm day. I did not think I needed any kind of jacket or anything, so I just left them all in my knapsack. I kind of tee-shirted it around with my knapsack. It was fun.

H You kind of touched on this earlier, but what was your motivation for going? Was it just because it was something to do? You said you were a musician, you obviously appreciate music.

L Yes When somebody says that we would of had a chance to see the names I recognized like Carlos Santana because I am a guitar player and he is a phenomenal guitar player, I associated that I also loved soul music from the black portion When they said Sly of Family Stone was going to be there, I loved them as far as their music they put out at that time. Then they said Hendrix was going to be there. I said, "I am going I do not care if it cost me two hundred dollars to get there, I am going." I was ready to sacrifice anything to get there as soon as they said Hendrix was going to be there Even as I was in high school, people kept coming up, "Did you hear the latest from Hendrix? Did you hear this song from Hendrix?"

There was so much music to enjoy, so many different artist But phenomenal, sensational artists you just grabbed onto and said, "This is happening now while I am still alive?" My motivation was to go and see and just to say I have been there I did not know what it would be like or how long I would stay, whether it be one day, two days or even three days. Since the way things were going to smooth, I stayed Had they been rough and I left, I probably would have missed a lot It was a drive that I have to go and see and I have to go and hear, so I can tell everybody in the world Which is what I am doing now I was there, I have seen, I have heard. Now, I come to see that the artists are gone I was glad that I experienced their music live It is a lot different when it is live

H Most of them, now-a-days, are gone Some are still around, but not with the intensity or the peak that a lot of them had in 1969 You pull in, you go through the grand entrance line I am sure you get there, shut the door to your car and you stretch and look around, what is your first impression? You are starting to see people move about, coming in by the waves you realize how open it is What are you thinking?

L We were kind of weird as the way things went because it was like, "Here we are from a small little town " At that time, Youngstown was not that big and Austintown was even smaller So it was like Austintown is a farmland like Canfield Here we are, we are kind of like sheltered people and we are then subjected to this major crowd of diversified people We were looking at what they are wearing, at the hair length saying, "I wish mine was that long " We were looking at the beard growth [There were] a lot of good looking women up there too

At the time, everybody was coming in and they would be neatly dressed and shadily dressed. They would be well dressed as far as summer attire, and some of them would have just cutoff shorts [on] These guys were coming in and I am thinking, "Okay, flip-flops, I can see that." I do not know, combat boots Evidently it took all kinds We saw Army jackets torn and still being worn We saw multicolored beads being worn around the neck, around the arms, around the ankles, and around the knees Wherever beads could be strapped to, they were wearing them These people coming in were really something to see They kept coming and coming in I was thinking to myself, "Everybody in the world must be here " Because I was thinking small as my little place is, only a handful of us are up here I did not know whether a handful from another section of our little world was up there

After a while, this thing got so out of hand in proportion to if you knew somebody

and they were there, you would never find them unless you took four days looking. Even if you passed the word, "Hey, you know Joe what's his name?," and they kept passing it down. It would take forever to find this guy. I ran across a few people I was in the Navy with and mentioned going to Woodstock and they said, "I was there, too. When?" I said, "I got there the first day." "I got there on the second day toward the evening." I am aghast because normally if you walk into an auditorium, you can take a look and recognize somebody you would see and say, "Oh, there is what's his name over there in the fourth row." You can be out of the amphitheater and you can recognize what's her name, she is wearing a certain color of dress. It is like trying to see the Louvre in Paris in a half an hour.

There was just so much to see these things that they show you on the camera films of Woodstock of people taking a bath in a lake or people mud sliding. This was minuscule. This was only a small part of the whole crowd. Everybody was having a good time. Nobody got into fist fights, and nobody overdosed to kill themselves; not in the area I was at. It seemed like if you had a half a gallon of wine you had about ten friends. You did not mind because you all are there for the same thing, to listen, to see and just try to say you experienced it.

H What artist did you see that you remember? Was there any particular artist or people you wanted to see?

L Yes. I definitely wanted to see Carlos Santana. I watched him with amazement. Sure, it was off in the distance, sure you cannot make out his face that well, but you can make out who it is as far as the lead guitarist there. You are hearing the sound come out, hearing this sound that is crisp, yet it was echoing throughout the valley there. It was phenomenal because it was better than the record, as far as I was concerned. I wanted to see The Grateful Dead and I wanted to see Jimi Hendrix. I was on the ship with his cousin. A guy by the name of Dodson is Jerry Garcia's cousin. He looked a little bit like him too, only he's got snow white hair and a beard. When I heard Jimi Hendrix and I saw the crowd's reaction, I knew that this was it. This was like the climax of the whole thing. Star-Spangled Banner [a song written and composed by Jimi Hendrix] just ran up and down my back. It was like, "Wow, I cannot believe this." I cannot believe the sound, and he is putting out everything. It was all there. The sound was there as far as the music, you can make out the Star-Spangled Banner. The augmentation sounds that were there were "bombs bursting in air." Watching this guy really putting himself into his music, the crowd was going crazy. They were just yelling, "Yeah!"

H What about the weather?

L The weather was not too pleasing after that first day. Thank god it was in the summertime because upstate New York can be bitter cold. I passed through there one time in the wintertime and it can be bitter cold even toward winter. That is why I say, it does not rain like that over here in Ohio. There is something about droplets of rain feeling like somebody smacked you. I am talking about raining hard. What used to be flat ground is now a pool of water. In two hours you have small pools of water here, there, and everywhere. It came

down like in a deluge and then eased up a little bit. Everybody thought it was going to quit when it eased up, then it started a real slight rain and they were yelling, "Yeah, it is going to quit." Then it came down in heavy rain again. It was like one wave after another. It did not stop anybody from anything. We still had the music, we still had the lights, and we still had the crowd. You would think that weather like this is automatically going to drive people off. No, that was the insanity of our youth. I loved it. We are here, let's do it. We are not going to melt, let's stay here.

H You bring up a good point of people not wanting to leave and wanting to stick around. A lot of people described Woodstock and the entire experience in the late 1960's and particularly Woodstock as a feeling of community and togetherness of sticking it out as one group. What do you think about that?

L I can look at it now in a way that I did not see it then. The way I look at it now, it was a calumination of diversified music to bring the youth of the United States into a unity that says we have something of our own since the world is pulling us this way and that way into their conflicts. Since the economy is trying to tear this apart and that apart. Since the educational situation of the colleges is getting more and more costly. What could we have that is ours the same way that the generation before us or the next generation will have something of their own. It was more than the music.

The diversification of the music showed that it was not one style of music that held us together. It was the fact that all of these artists were there to say, "Young ones of the United States, we are going through a changing time. We are going through a tough time, but everything that changes is tough until it is completed. Once it is completed, you will see that there is a benefit in the change." This is what I see now. There was a benefit of some of us going through this. Some of us became hippies to where we got into the establishment that we hated. Some of us held on to our "always wanted to have long hair."

We became better for it, to know that we can make it through a tough, changing world time, such as Vietnam, Korea, before that and what is next. It was a time where we can say, "This is our life at this time and we are going to live the way we choose to live it. We will not be dictated to by an establishment of another era that does not understand us." We did not feel that we were understood because we were being yanked around. When a president cuts every kind of deferment, including farm deferment, and he only leaves sole surviving son deferment to yank people out of the higher education that they are paying for so that they can go balance his economy, or better yet, his world populous of the United States, something is wrong.

They did not understand us. They did not understand what we wanted. We wanted to better ourselves, not to better themselves. With their "let's make money", as long as we can keep this police action going we are making money. We knew that here at Youngstown University in 1969. They protested with cause, "Why should we? It is not our country." Now if they were in our backyard, we will go. If they are getting close, we will go. Show us a purpose, not just because the French, the British, the Australians, and anybody else that tried and failed, and now, big brother United States is go to go. No, that is not a good

reason

I was dirt close to going to Canada with the boys. That is one thing I believed in. That was not my fight. When we got these changes going on in the United States like these, and you have the economical unbalance, and you have the idea of jobs and where they are going to come from we have unemployment to the max. There was a double digit unemployment at the time. I said, "We have to make some changes." Everybody around me that was graduating from high school said, "We have got to make some changes." They tried to get in to where they could make changes and the President said, "No, your deferment is cut. No longer will you be deferred from military, you are drafted." I was resentful. Then again, now I see the changes that we have gone through have made us better people.

If we had to do it again, we would not go into an uprising of rioting or protesting dominantly. At our age, we would handle it more in a fashion that would be acceptable to the establishment. The fashion which we handled before was totally unacceptable and it went on with the radical times, the radical changes, the radical actions, and the radical dress. This went along with the times as to say, "I want to be heard. I do not have time to raise my hand. I am speaking out. That is it." This was how they reacted. It definitely was not accepted by the establishment.

H You are on your way home. It just ended and it hit the news. What do you think it said to the parents of America?

L The second day up there I called my folks to let them know we got in that first day and got situated and everything was going fine. Then some of that rotten weather started setting in and even though that it was raining like crazy everybody was staying. My dad said, "What is the matter with those crazy kids? Don't they know how to go home?" I said, "Those crazy kids happen to love that music and they want to stay." He asked, "What are you going to do?" I said, "I am going to stay too." He asked, "Is everybody that went up there with you going to stay?" I said, "Yes." He said, "Okay, but you be careful." I said, "Okay."

Coming back on that last day, you would think to yourself that the media has done not one American teenager any justice by the way they depicted Woodstock. "If we can slam them in any way, we are going to show you the worst side because we are the media. We have to build a story."

I will tell you what, I am very upset with the American media versus the European media. I have seen the difference. The European media, even if it is blood, guts, and gore, will show and tell you exactly without propaganda what is going on in the United States. They are bleeding over here, "Don't show that." Overdose, just show somebody stretched out on a cot, somebody being carried out to an ambulance, show that. "Then we will make a story out of that." We got to get some of that filth in there because of all those naked people running around. They did not have any toilets out there. We got to make some horrendous story up about the sanitation.

They do not accept what we accepted. We accepted. That is our unity. That is us. We share a common bond, not just the music, but the idea of gathering and talking with people from all over the United States, having fun at it without being policed. Here they are

trying to say, "No, this is not acceptable. This is not the way we do things in the United States. When we gather, we gather orderly and assemble orderly. When we file out, we do it orderly." The grounds may have been left a mess, a little bit. For the most part, three hundred thousand people. I mean you got to have a little bit of ground left a mess.

The day I got home, I came in and my mom and dad were watching some movie on television and I said, "I am home." They said, "Are you home already?" I said, "Yes." They asked, "Are you okay?" I said, "Yes, my mind is still fogged on how many people were there." I really did get home safe and sound. That was a big scare to me that I would get lost in a crowd like that and I would never be able to find my way back home. To me, you could have put me in a different country and called it upstate New York. At that time, I did not venture very far out of my own area. When we made road trips, we made them in a van with five guys. We would go up, set up, play, pack up. Then five guys would be in the van on the way back. This was a lot different.

H In your opinion, what role did drugs and alcohol play? Drugs in particular, what role did they play? Was it primary? Was it secondary?

L I think it was really secondary. A lot of people would like to think that it was primary because it was becoming more out of the closet. In the sixties, sure there was the marijuana, and the acid. Then again, you are an individual and had your own choice. That was what the sixties were all about. It was making your own choices for yourself; not allowing somebody else to persuade you. I am not going to be in a click. I am not going to be one of those guys that hangs around all together. I want to be me, I want to be for myself. That is selfish in a way, but it keeps me in check to say, "No, I do not care to have any of that," or "Not right now, I do not think so." That is myself.

I did see quite a bit of usage of it, both alcohol and drugs. For the most part, acid scared the hell out of me as far as some of the reactions some of these people went through. I do not think I have that strong of stamina or fortitude that I can allow myself that much luxury in my head. Smoke is one thing, acid is another. Smoke you can just do a little bit and leave a little for a long time and it does not bother you, just pass it around. You do not really get that lit, you just get mellow from the smoking then fall asleep and pass out. Alcohol, at that time, for me was a new tempter. In respect, I liked the way it tastes. "Hey, that is good. Did you taste this one, it just came out, this new kind of wine. Did you taste this? This is homemade?" I was a wine drinker, I drank some beer, some heavy alcohol. For the most part, I like wine. It was mellow in my stomach. I felt like I was in control of it at that time. It does not slam your head as bad as blended alcohol, but it is still alcohol.

The fact was, there was still the usage of both drugs and alcohol. The drugs were not primary, they were secondary to the alcohol. It seemed like everybody and anybody could get their hands on a six pack. Not everybody and anybody can get their hands on a bag. If they knew somebody who had a bag, they can get their hands on a roll, this little dubbie [marijuana]. Other than that, they are not going to go very far so they got to keep in communication.

You would see in these crowds how they communicate between each other and sneak over here and do this and do that I sit back and sip my wine and I watch and I learn and stay away from because I do not know what the heck that is all about I know what is in that bottle, I know what that is all about I don't know what is over there. The unknown was kind of scary at that time

H Kind of a common theme throughout this whole thing, isn't it?

L Yes, the unknown. They were both prevalent

H You see all of this stuff in attempt in this day in age an attempt to return to the previous day such as that We see in today's common trend They even tried to recreate Woodstock, you saw that?

L That was a fiasco.

H What does Woodstock 1969 say to the youth and society in general today? What do you think of this attempt to emulate the past? What do you think about that?

L It is as though they want to reach back and say, "There was something moving There was something magnetic There was something alive and driving, and I want it back I want it back so now these people in this era and generation can see that I experienced the best " When they tried to do it again, I do not know It is like trying to re-chew chewing gum that has already been used It will not have the same flavor It will not have the same shape It will not come out right You cannot make a cake twice You can only do it once If you do it right, it is the best one you ever made If you try to do it again and it comes out not so good, you say to yourself, "Oh well, the reason that it did not come out so good the second time was because?" And then you start making excuses There was no excuse for the originality of the spirit of the people that were there No excuse whatsoever

The originality of the people that were there were, I came because I had the desire to be some place where my generation gathered A lot of people came just to hear Some people came to see Some people came to observe and film Some people came to play or create music for these people Whatever the reason was that everybody to Woodstock 1969, it was not because it was well laid plans

It was because the names had created their own image and the groups that were being played and the people that were already followers in respect of music Not in the respect of person, but in the respect of music. They were followers to that music They wanted to say "I was there." They knew it was not for the protest They knew it was not for the glory of somebody saying, "Oh, you were there? Did you know that makes you the best person in the world because you were there?" No, it was not for the glory or anything like that. It was for the fact that when you went to Woodstock, as I went to Woodstock, it was the fact that your dream was fulfilled You dreamed about watching these people perform. You dreamed about being in crowd of people that enjoyed the same type of music and to really feel alive,

to feel the electricity of the whole atmosphere, and it happened. It is like a dream come true, it happened. To try and re-dream it, you cannot. To try to super charge it with the same electricity, you cannot.

Because, like I said, it was a calumination of everything taking place around inside the United States. It was a calumination of not just music, but of people and events and of world effects on the United States. We didn't understand it as kids, that this was what was driving this whole situation. We learned it later what for us as kids what was driving it was the music, the artist, and the place was freedom. Nobody knows me in upstate Woodstock. I could be whoever I wanted to. I can act like an animal if I wanted to or I can enjoy and sit back or whatever and that was apart of it too.

H Is there anything specific or general of how it changed you? Did you ever look back in the last twenty, twenty-five years and say, "I remember that, that reminds me of what happened then"?

L I look back at it in a lot of ways. I look back at it as the music projected the time. It also, as you hear a song, a memory will flash back as to where you were, what you may have been doing, things around you that were happening. When I hear this music from Woodstock, I look back in my mind and I see the crowd and hear all the yelling and screaming. Everybody is having a good time and yelling up to the bands and waiting for the rains to quit. Just everything going on. People trying to make tents out of their jackets just so their head can be stuck under something besides the rain. It was so funny. There was so much going on. To see all of this every time the music plays.

I still listen to that type of music because it brings back good thoughts. You experience things and associate them with something that will stimulate that. When I experienced Woodstock, I associated with good times and good friends. When I hear that music it makes me feel good again.

I do not think about the world events that were taking place because I wanted so much to shut them out because it seemed like we were going down hill. We were going down hill and losing it because America was not as strong as it was in the 1950's, that was my impression. To see this where we gathered and that much mass of peoples, I kind of changed my mind, maybe I was wrong, maybe we are stronger than I gave everybody credit for. Still today all I feel changed me. It made more objective instead of subjective. I see it as I am more willing to learn about other people and their cultures than I am to listen to the news about who got shot in a certain town or who got their car ripped off or what senator got in trouble with some lady. To me, that is second hand because you only live once and you got to do it to the most. That means you have to expand.

That was another thing of the sixties, guys wanted to expand their minds and some of them did it right with education. Some of them did it right by using cultures to teach them instead of the drugs. Mind expansion drugs, Timothy Leary, no thank you. The dude is still out of it. I know the mind is a great thing, but to experience somebody else's culture with them teaching you what certain food tastes like, what a certain outfit looks like, where they build their houses. From that person of a different culture, that was more of what was

happening in Woodstock.

The people who were performing were showing us we have a culture This music is our culture. This is what we where, Nehru jackets, paisley, bell bottoms This is us, this is our culture This is how it came to be Not so much what Country Joe and the Fish and the way he was singing John Sebastian was great. I never heard of the band before I got up there and they put on a performance that was phenomenal. That really got me kicking I said, "Yes, we are in the right place, this music is moving "

I have changed in a lot of ways, but there are things that I will never let go of As far as Woodstock goes, that have taught me there at Woodstock, the sharing and the caring was apart of me, but it was not a dominate part of me. Coming from brothers and sisters, I learned to care and share a little bit, but I was still a lot selfish When I got out there and I saw people in need, I started sharing and it was like, "No, do not worry about giving that back, here take this shirt Do not worry about it, you can have something to drink, you do not have nothing " You knew these people would reach out and do for you the same way They are not users, they are there because they are trying to be apart of That was the whole ticket that taught me

H· Are there any final thoughts or comments that you might like to add? I think we got a pretty good interview

L I appreciate it The only final thought for me is, I wish we could have done it in an era of less world explosion to where the younger people's minds would have been more focused on the idea of being able to gather and all of the things the music meant. Rather than being troubled with the Vietnam situation that was going on. Some of them came to escape Some of them came to say, "Well, I do not have very long until I turn eighteen, so I better run up there " They were from all ages I met kids who were six and seven years old I met kids who were twelve and fifteen. I met guys that were fifty something It is something when you got something troubling your mind such as that to where you pretty soon will have to be someplace where you do not want to be If this whole symposium would have been in a different train of thought, let's say people did not have to worry about the Vietnam situation, I think it would have taken over the whole state of New York. I thought is was going to anyway.

H That is a unique experience Thank you very much for your time today

End of Interview