



The Republic of Rock: Music and Citizenship in the Sixties Counterculture

By Michael J. Kramer

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In his 1967 megahit "San Francisco," Scott McKenzie sang of "people in motion" coming from all across the country to San Francisco, the white-hot center of rock music and anti-war protests. At the same time, another large group of young Americans was also in motion, less eagerly, heading for the jungles of Vietnam.

Now, in *The Republic of Rock*, Michael Kramer draws on new archival sources and interviews to explore sixties music and politics through the lens of these two generation-changing places--San Francisco and Vietnam. From the Acid Tests of Ken Kesey and the Merry Pranksters to hippie disc jockeys on strike, the military's use of rock music to "boost morale" in Vietnam, and the forgotten tale of a South Vietnamese rock band, *The Republic of Rock* shows how the musical connections between the City of the Summer of Love and war-torn Southeast Asia were crucial to the making of the sixties counterculture. The book also illustrates how and why the legacy of rock music in the sixties continues to matter to the meaning of citizenship in a global society today. Going beyond clichéd narratives about sixties music, Kramer argues that rock became a way for participants in the counterculture to think about what it meant to be an American citizen, a world citizen, a citizen-consumer, or a citizen-soldier. The music became a resource for grappling with the nature of democracy in larger systems of American power both domestically and globally.

For anyone interested in the 1960s, popular music, and American culture and counterculture, *The Republic of Rock* offers new insight into the many ways rock music has shaped our ideas of individual freedom and collective belonging.

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The Republic of Rock: Music and Citizenship in the Sixties Counterculture

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Counterculture By Michael J. Kramer**

Editorial Review

Review

"Kramer's study of rock provides a model for future work on music's significance for U.S. soldiers in Vietnam that might explore other musical genres and their connections to questions of racial identity and pride...Throughout, Kramer's book is a model of thorough research, with conclusions informed by an extensive body of archival sources and original interviews with musicians, as well as serious engagement with the major scholarship on rock and the counterculture...A groundbreaking study highly recommended to any reader interested in 1960s rock or the role of music in the Vietnam conflict."--*Journal of the Society of American Music*

"...[A] provocative, always smart, and well-grounded account of the role rock music played in the lived experience of the sixties-era counterculture....Kramer has accomplished what few other historians of the counterculture have done: he has found stories of men and women actively involved in the cultural rebellion of the sixties era who struggled to turn their dreams into actions. Kramer enters this producerist counterculture through the agency of rock music."--David Farber, author of *The Age of Great Dreams: America in the 1960s*

"*The Republic of Rock* offers valuable insights into the culture of rock music in San Francisco and Saigon during the 1960s. Kramer's book provides an informed and informative retrospective on a decade when sonic expectations for humanity soared, only to be brought back to earth by other musical depictions of ghetto lives, police harassment, mindless capitalism, drug abuse, and military madness."--B. Lee Cooper, *Rock Music Studies*

"Kramer probes deeply into the countercultural archives of art posters, underground newspapers, music, press releases, and interviews to establish how the rock music scene in San Francisco presented both a challenge to traditional values, while simultaneously embracing a hip capitalism which commercialized the counterculture. Kramer argues that the acid rock scene in San Francisco became a community in which music was a primary avenue through which to address issues of citizenship in what eventually was known as Woodstock nation."--Ron Briley, *History News Network*

"Groundbreaking....Draws on a wide range of sources in exploring the role of music, drugs, and the counterculture in San Francisco and South Vietnam from the late 1960s into the early 1970s."--*CHOICE*

"Given my particular interests in history and music, I cracked open *The Republic of Rock: Music and Citizenship in the Sixties Counterculture* thinking that I would be more reminded than enlightened. I was

pleasantly surprised to have been incorrect in my expectations."--Blake Maddux, *Dig Boston*

"From happenings to alternative rock radio stations to music festivals Michael Kramer traces the close relationship of what he calls 'hip capitalism' and the emergence of niche marketing to utopian ideas of an open-ended public sphere with unblocked, unmediated sharing between all citizens. His book shows just how inseparable economic, political, and metaphysical ideas grew during the 1960s. He cinches his argument by turning to Vietnam. His chapter on the embrace of rock and soul music by the U.S. military is extraordinarily elegant. By looking into the rock groups that young Vietnamese formed, the book explores why aspects of U.S. culture has had such powerful international influence, even when U.S. political, economic, or military power was failing. The story told in this book shows the power of artists and audiences coming together."--Richard Candida Smith, University of California, Berkeley

"In *Republic of Rock*, Michael Kramer skillfully examines rock music as an energizing 'circuit' connecting disparate communities of San Francisco hippies, Vietnam grunts, and South Vietnamese urbanites in a transnational 'sonic space' that fostered civic participation on young people's terms. Deeply researched and with a strong theoretical foundation, *Republic of Rock* helps readers to think expansively about music's power to define social relationships, in the United State and South Vietnam, in the Vietnam War and on the home front. Kramer's smart, witty prose and interdisciplinary approach to sixties counterculture, American military history, and global citizenship make this book suitable for classroom use but also a great read for rock fans of any generation."--Meredith H. Lair, author of *Armed with Abundance: Consumerism and Soldiering in the Vietnam War*

"Throughout, Kramer's book is a model of thorough research, with conclusions informed by an extensive body of archival sources and original interviews with musicians, as well as serious engagement with the major scholarship on rock and the counterculture. In short, *The Republic of Rock* is a groundbreaking study highly recommended to any reader interested in 1960s rock or the role of music in the Vietnam conflict."--*Journal of the Society for American Music*

About the Author

Michael J. Kramer teaches History and American Studies at Northwestern University, and writes about arts and culture at www.culturerover.com.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Marie Daugherty:

This book untitled *The Republic of Rock: Music and Citizenship in the Sixties Counterculture* to be one of several books that best seller in this year, honestly, that is because when you read this e-book you can get a lot of benefit upon it. You will easily to buy this particular book in the book retail outlet or you can order it

by using online. The publisher with this book sells the e-book too. It makes you easier to read this book, since you can read this book in your Touch screen phone. So there is no reason to you personally to past this guide from your list.

Wendy Miller:

Reading can called mind hangout, why? Because when you are reading a book specially book entitled The Republic of Rock: Music and Citizenship in the Sixties Counterculture your mind will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in every aspect that maybe not known for but surely will end up your mind friends. Imaging just about every word written in a book then become one contact form conclusion and explanation which maybe you never get before. The The Republic of Rock: Music and Citizenship in the Sixties Counterculture giving you another experience more than blown away your thoughts but also giving you useful details for your better life on this era. So now let us present to you the relaxing pattern is your body and mind will likely be pleased when you are finished examining it, like winning a casino game. Do you want to try this extraordinary spending spare time activity?

Kathryn Botello:

Is it anyone who having spare time then spend it whole day by means of watching television programs or just telling lies on the bed? Do you need something new? This The Republic of Rock: Music and Citizenship in the Sixties Counterculture can be the response, oh how comes? The new book you know. You are therefore out of date, spending your free time by reading in this fresh era is common not a nerd activity. So what these books have than the others?

Vincent Johnson:

Within this era which is the greater man or woman or who has ability in doing something more are more precious than other. Do you want to become certainly one of it? It is just simple approach to have that. What you have to do is just spending your time not much but quite enough to have a look at some books. On the list of books in the top list in your reading list is actually The Republic of Rock: Music and Citizenship in the Sixties Counterculture. This book which is qualified as The Hungry Slopes can get you closer in getting precious person. By looking upwards and review this book you can get many advantages.

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