Hippie

Fashion.

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Today, the fashion world has once again discovered the wonderful styles from the '60s. We've come full circle and clothes are not the only part of hippiedom to resurface for the new millennium. It's a symbol of the resurgence of hippie values in their culture.

In the '60s, without warning, hippies turned fashion upside down and inside out. They brought a tsunami of new styles and colors into fashion like never before. From the Haight-Ashbury to London to Katmandu, the hippies took fashion on an eye-popping psychedelic journey.

The fashion rule in the '60s was that there were no rules. Anything went as long as it wasn't based on the drab, conservative styles of the early '60s. I doubt if fashion designers were able to keep up unless they dropped acid. The only thing they seemed to be able to influence was the miniskirt. This is because many of the hippie fashions were based on traditional designs from India, Nepal, Central America, Bali and Morocco.

Many new fashions emanated from San Francisco and London to some extent. The fashion leaders were the icons of our day. Rock 'n roll stars like Jimi Hendrix and The Beatles appeared in public and on record albums in all sorts of colorful costumes.

Of course your average hippie couldn't afford to shop like a rock star. Our stores were less like Harrod's and more like the Salvation Army. Nevertheless they were able to piece together something from bits of cloth. It was easy to take an old pair of blue jeans, holes and all, and just put some bright patches over the holes. If they didn't fit, you could open the seams and insert a triangle of something else, thus giving you flared bellbottoms. A cheap bandanna, an old vest, some beads and you were the height of fashion.

The elements that went into the hippy wardrobe were only limited by their psychedelic imaginations. Bellbottoms ruled the day, from striped, to blue jeans to patchwork, to hip huggers, even leather pants were popular. Tops ran the gamut from Nehru shirts, to brightly colored African dashikis and Middle Eastern caftans, to halter tops, tie dyes, and frilly, silky shirts for men! Women wore saris from India and sarongs from Bali and Java. Velvet, leather, batik, denim, Indian cotton and silk were all popular fabrics. Op art, paisleys and psychedelic designs appeared on clothes, occasionally making themdizzy! Footwear ranged from the basic sandal and Birkenstocks to zippered boots, platforms and bright patent leather shoes. Peasant dresses, long skirts and layering were also very popular.

Then there's that symbol of women's sexual freedom (or slavery), the mini-skirt! It was designed by Mary Quant in 1965, and was responsible for the huge surge in pantyhose sales. Along with see-through blouses and braless breasts, it's no wonder there was a sexual revolution.

Accessories included love beads, bandannas, leather vests, jackets with frills, and granny glasses. Jewelry, especially if made of silver from Mexico, India or Morocco was essential. Bangles, rings, earrings, nose rings, and ankle bracelets were worn, especially for parties or concerts. Necklaces were adorned with peace symbols, raised fists, yin-yang symbols, and other eastern esoterica. Hats ran the gamut from tall Jamiroquai numbers (John Phillips liked them) to small head hugging Islamic numbers (Richie Havens). Fedora type hats were usually decorated with feathers, beads or other colorful objects (Hendrix & Dylan liked these).

It's amazing how many of these things have come back into fashion over the years. At the moment we are witnessing a complete resurgence thanks to so many movies like 'Austin Powers' and 'The '60s'.

Let's not forget how they let their Free Flag fly! Men's long hair was symbolic of their disdain for convention. Most hippies just let it grow, perhaps trimming it once in a great while. Blacks, both male and female wore Afros, using Afro piks (combs) to tease their hair out to the max. Men grew long side burns, mustaches and beards. Women stopped shaving their legs and underarms.

It must be added that no self-respecting hippie ever wore a logo of some corporation. This was heretical to the hippy movement. It's no wonder so many kids today, sick of having to conform to corporate ideals of fashion have instead sought out the Hippy Brand® of non-conformist, anti-establishment, revolutionary, laid back sportswear! No logos, no commercials with sports figures, no multi-million dollar endorsements, no hype. Just cheap, comfortable, easily repaired, second-hand clothes to give you the look.

There was fashion for the nose as well. Scents filled the air wherever hippies gathered, and it wasn't just marijuana. Incense and perfume were standard accouterments of the day. The flower children had to smell like flowers, with lavender, rose, gardenia, and other floral scents. Patchouli was perhaps the most popular since it helped mask the smell of pot. Sandalwood and musk were popular scents for men.

At home, on college campuses, in crash pads, and on communes hippies decorated their living space with every sort of poster imaginable. These were large cheap and colorful and would cover much of the wall space. Concert posters from the Fillmore, publicity posters or album covers were the most popular. But some posters also made a statement about the residents' political views. These included peace and love posters, antiwar, black power, feminism, and posters that protested just about everything. A lot of the posters were just art from other periods, Beardsley and Maxfield Parrish were two very popular artists. Tibetan mandalas and yantras were used for decoration as well as meditation.

Most furnishings were imported and hippies fueled the huge boom in imported goods. These included beaded curtains, large floor pillows, bean bag chairs, wicker tables and chairs, brass from India, statues of Indian gods like Shiva, Ganesha, or Buddha, Moroccan carpets and kilims. Headshops and import stores like Pier One succeeded thanks to hippies.

Prior to the hippies, most homes had maybe one dusty plant in a corner. With the back to nature movement, hippies filled their homes with life. Sometimes there were more plants inside than outside, creating a sort of jungle, often with ferns, vines, and other lush foliage dominating rooms. Hippies loved to paint their rooms in bright colors and often added rainbows, stars, even murals on the walls.

An essential part of any hippy household was the stereo. Hippies bought the best sound systems they could afford. That is because the music of the era was so important to them. They got stoned to it, they danced, they partied, they meditated.

In the early sixties music went from monaural (mono) to stereo which in itself was a psychedelic effect that everyone could appreciate. Then there was quadrophonic (4 channel) sound. Things went as far as quintophonic (5 discrete channels) which was popular in movie theaters.

The typical hippy vehicle was a VW bus or van or bug. Small campers and even schoolbuses were converted into living space for one to a dozen people. These were often painted (they usually needed a paint job badly) in bright colors and psychedelic patterns, which sometimes included flowers, peace signs, mystical symbols, even landscape paintings.

Food is an important part of every culture. Hippies developed their own cuisine, a mishmash of Indian, American, middle Eastern, Mexican, Italian and Asian with an emphasis on vegetarian. Cheap meals are the rule with soups, fresh salads, a hearty main course (with lots of vegetables) and a dessert. Organic produce, especially from one's own garden is always preferred. Fresh fruit juices and smoothies (usually with yogurt and fresh fruit - similar to Indian Lassies, but improved upon by hippies) are great tasting, healthy treats.

Hippies helped popularize Indian food, especially curries and chapatis, dahl and basmati rice. Asian foods like tofu, soybeans, tamari, rice crackers, miso and tempeh are now part of many healthy American diets. They buy bulk foods like flour, grains, beans and nuts, sold by the pound, not prepackaged and left on supermarket shelves for years. Whole grain bakeries all over the country now offer a variety of multigrain breads which are far tastier and healthier than the traditional American white bread. Yogurt, kefir, goat milk, soy milk are all non-traditional dairy products popularized by hippies.

Health food stores and cooperatives exist now in almost every decent sized town and city in the U.S. This is directly a result of the Hippy fondness for health, quality and freshness. Hippies helped promulgate the laws that regulate organic produce found in many states (California and Oregon are good examples). Organic farming is now accepted as a regular practice across the country. Ironic isn't it, since we've had to educate the brainwashed farmers of America about the dangers of herbicides, pesticides and chemical fertilizers and teach them how to grow organically, the way it was done by their grandfathers. People think hippies are unhealthy, yet we were responsible for the health craze that swept the country in the '70s and '80s.

Holistic medicine, with origins in Asia, Africa, India, and native cultures around the world are studied, taught and practiced by hippies. Some of these include herbalogy, homeopathy, acupuncture, massage, reflexology, shiatsu, and ayurvedic medicine. Other things hippies do to stay healthy on their own include hiking, Tai Chi, Yoga, meditation, fasting, sweat lodges, hot springs and Sufi dancing.

Just the act of going barefoot is revolutionary for most people. Shoes confine more than just our feet. Walking barefoot puts you in direct touch with the world around you. You're more sensitive and aware. Your more vulnerable, but more open.

Hippies, ever concerned about ecology, were the first to promote biodegradable products, and the use of natural ingredients in everything from fabrics to shampoo. They made sure that every product ingested by Americans has a label indicating all its ingredients. They boycotted those companies: whose products polluted the environment; used animals for testing; were prowar or very reactionary; or manufactured dangerous chemicals or weapons.

It must be said that in general most hippies were anti-fashion. That is they rejected the corporate nature of the fashion industry as well as the power of individuals to dictate the way others should dress or conform to a set standard. The fashion industry was seen as part of the Capitalist propaganda machine that kept us slaving to consume the latest fashions. This is more true today than ever.

If it's not clothes, it's cars, toys, even our lifestyles that are marketed to us by demographics. And with Internet shopping they can track our every move. Many hail this as a great innovation, and the ultimate direct marketing tool. But isn't it just a more efficient way to keep us imprisoned in a consumer nightmare? Like a glutton, they are fed more and more tasty morsels until we are so fat with consumption that our lives serve no other purpose.

The hippies' rejection of prevailing fashion led them to explore other cultures and in doing so they learned and adopted many concepts and practices alien to Western society. Much of what they pioneered is now an important part of popular culture and thinking. Hippies influenced not only clothes but a wide range of ideas and attitudes thus changing society in the process.

**Information was taken from web-site http:/www.hippy.com**