

The Disturbing Reality About What's Happening to Your Teen This Summer

Summer music festivals are exploding across America. Thirty-two million attend—12 times the number of people who die annually! Average travel distance is 903 miles, and festivals normally last three days.

What can be more fun than gathering music lovers outdoors with their favorite artists?

How many parents are ignorant of what occurs at these massive gatherings? Others suspect something inherently dangerous but yield permission, lifting a prayer as they reluctantly send off their youth.

Here's a handful of heavy hitter rockfests attracting millions this summer: Lockn', Afro Punk, Coachella, Bonnaroo, Moog Fest, Pitchfork, Lollapalooza, Hangout, Bumbershoot, (Expletive) Yeah Fest and Electric Forest.

Festivals are all over Europe. Madrid has Mad Cool; Lisbon hosts Super Bock Super Rock; and Germany features Melt. Sweden just pulled the plug on Bravalla, headlined by the Killers, after four rapes and 23 sexual assaults.

England addressed sexual assaults as 28 festivals staged an online blackout in a #saferpaceatfestivals campaign.

While some events are tame, like Nashville's CMA Music Fest and Pilgrimage Fest, the overwhelming majority are not. And while this is not a blanket condemnation of this growing phenomenon, we must be discerning.

Surveying the Scene

The general atmosphere at music festivals is mellow accompanied by more highly charged segments in later hours. Not everybody is in an inebriated stupor, but alcohol and drugs are pervasive. Security turns a blind eye so attendees can have a good time.

Promoters making megabucks don't want to spoil the atmosphere with police snooping around. Unflattering publicity is squelched, and victims rarely report crimes because most can't recall details due to drug or alcohol impairment.

Lest anyone think I'm an alarmist, even *Billboard* magazine, the music industry's hedonistic bible, raises concerns. "Festival Deaths on the Rise" and "Three Dead and 100 Hospitalized after Veld and Boonstock Festivals" report chilling realities.

This month's issue (July 13, 2017) reveals:

- Musician Jared Leto invited Firefly Fest women to get "restraining-order- crazy!" (page 35)
- Pro LGBTQ and weed-friendly fests now incorporate marijuana vendors—one with 50 booths for sampling weed. (page 29)
- Rapper Travis Scott was arrested in Arkansas for inciting a riot. In New York a fan broke his leg after Scott urged fans to jump off a balcony and elsewhere shouted, "I came for the chaos!" (page. 28)
- Carlos Santana said what should be happening now "...is more people taking LSD, peyote and mescaline!" (page 70)

To be fair, not all singers and songs are offensive; not every rapper, band and comedian spews out profanities; not everybody is intoxicated and scantily clad; and sexual activity isn't everywhere. Yet unrighteous behavior is pervasive and effects millions of impressionable youth.

Don't Be Fooled

Sanitized coverage of music festivals usually portrays these positive images: panoramic views of crowds with bouncing beach balls, electrifying footage of performers and smiling participants embracing.

The Public Broadcasting System regularly features fundraising specials with musical artists of yesteryear. They feature malt shop memory-makers and past superstars.

The PBS happy host romanticizes, removing the turbulent times: "These are all the original hits, not available in stores, all digitally remastered. Relive the fond memories of love, harmony and peace."

But that time was not all groovy, lovey, flowing-hair girls in granny dresses twirling in the park amidst syrupy-faced guys singing "The Age of Aquarius."

A similar illusion is presented in a current documentary commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Monterey Pop Festival. The movie opens with images of strolling young people amidst hypnotic music of Scott McKenzie's "If you're going to San Francisco you're gonna' meet some gentle people there ... summertime will be a love-in there."

The film features performers like Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, Brian Jones, Keith Moon and others, dead from the dissipation of drugs, drunkenness and debauchery. How many of the naïve pot smoking young people influenced by the seductive festival lifestyle, crashed and burned like Mama Cass and Michelle Phillips of the Mamas and Papas who were swaying on stage?

Sex, Drugs and Rock 'n' Roll!

Recently my wife and I returned from a trip to my boyhood home of Cleveland, Ohio where the term "rock 'n' roll" originated and where the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame is. How many people viewing the icons enshrined there make the connection that scores died tragically due to the hedonistic lifestyle they

celebrated?

Rock's founding father, Little Richard, whose life became a cesspool of heroin, cocaine and sexual promiscuity admits, "This music does not glorify God! You can't drink out of God's cup and the devil's cup at the same time. I was one of the pioneers of that music, one of the builders. I know what the blocks are made of, because I built them!"

I urge you, as a former drummer for "The Lost Souls," consider these musical pied pipers, all tragically dead—one fourth of them before 30.

50 Dead Rockstars

Jimi Hendrix. Janis Joplin. Jim Morrison. Bryan Jones (Rolling Stones). Whitney Houston. Amy Winehouse. Kurt Cobain. Sid Vicious. Keith Moon. Bobby Hatfield (Righteous Brothers). Paul Butterfield. Notorious . John Entwistle (Who).

Chris Cornell (Audioslave). Brian Cole (Association). John Melvoin (Smashing Pumpkins). Hillel Slovak (Chili Peppers). Nikki Sixx (Motley Crue).

Layne Stayley (Alice in Chains). Elvis. David Ruffin. Tommy Bolin (Deep Purple). Michael Jackson. Prince. John Belushi. Dee Dee Ramone. Gregg Allman. Howie Epstein (Tom Petty and Heartbreakers). Tupac Shakur. Freddie Mercury. Ike Turner. Rick James. Tim Buckley. Mike Starr (Alice in Chains). Shannon Hoon (Blind Melon). Paul Gray (Slipknot). Alan Wilson (Canned Heat). Bon Scott (AC/DC). Pigpen McKernan (Grateful Dead). Gary Thain (Uriah Heep). Kristen Pfaff (Hole). Fat Pat. Darby Crash (Germes). Gram Parsons. Gidget Gein (Marilyn Manson). Mikey Welsh (Weezer). Scott Weiland (Stone Temple Pilots). Steve Clark (Def Leppard). Greg Herbert (Blood Sweat and Tears). Sean McCabe (Inc. & Dagger). Jimmy McCulloch (Wings).

If these people could return from the grave, how many would advise, "Steer clear of danger ahead"?

Scripture refers to similar festivities and cautions: " Now all these things happened to them for examples. They are written as an admonition to us ... Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed, lest he fall" (-12). {eoa}