

The Harvard Psychedelic Club: How Timothy Leary, Ram Dass, Huston Smith, and Andrew Weil Killed the Fifties and Ushered in a New Age for America

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"[Don Lattin] has created a stimulating and thoroughly engrossing read." -Dennis McNally, author of *A Long Strange Trip: The Inside History of the Grateful Dead*, and *Desolate Angel: Jack Kerouac, the Beat Generation, and America*

It is impossible to overstate the cultural significance of the four men described in Don Lattin's *The Harvard Psychedelic Club*. Huston Smith, tirelessly working to promote cross-cultural religious and spiritual tolerance. Richard Alpert, a.k.a. Ram Dass, inspiring generations with his mantra, "be here now." Andrew Weil, undisputed leader of the holistic medicine revolution. And, of course, Timothy Leary, the charismatic, rebellious counter-culture icon and LSD guru. Journalist Don Lattin provides the funny, moving inside story of the "Cambridge Quartet," who crossed paths with the infamous Harvard Psilocybin Project in the early 60's, and went on to pioneer the Mind/Body/Spirit movement that would popularize yoga, vegetarianism, and Eastern mysticism in the Western world.

This book is the story of how three brilliant scholars and one ambitious freshman crossed paths in the early sixties at a Harvard-sponsored psychedelic-drug research project, transforming their lives and American culture and launching the mind/body/spirit movement that inspired the explosion of yoga classes, organic produce, and alternative medicine.

The four men came together in a time of upheaval and experimentation, and their exploration of an expanded consciousness set the stage for the social, spiritual, sexual, and psychological revolution of the 1960s. Timothy Leary would be the rebellious trickster, the premier proponent of the therapeutic and spiritual benefits of LSD, advising a generation to "turn on, tune in, and drop out." Richard Alpert would be the seeker, traveling to India and returning to America as Ram Dass, reborn as a spiritual leader with his "Be Here Now" mantra, inspiring a restless army of spiritual pilgrims. Huston Smith would be the teacher, practicing every world religion, introducing the Dalai Lama to the West, and educating generations of Americans to adopt a more tolerant, inclusive attitude toward other cultures' beliefs. And young Andrew Weil would be the healer, becoming the undisputed leader of alternative medicine, devoting his life to the holistic reformation of the American health care system.

It was meant to be a time of joy, of peace, and of love, but behind the scenes lurked backstabbing, jealousy, and outright betrayal. In spite of their personal conflicts, the members of the Harvard Psychedelic Club would forever change the way Americans view religion and practice medicine, and the very way we look at body and soul.

Don Lattin is one of the nation's leading journalists covering alternative and mainstream religious movements and figures in America. His work has appeared in dozens of U.S. magazines and newspapers, including the *San Francisco Chronicle*, where he covered the religion beat for nearly two decades. Lattin has also worked as a consultant and commentator for *Dateline*, *Primetime*, *Good Morning America*, *Nightline*, *Anderson Cooper 360*, and PBS's *Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly*. He is the author of *Jesus Freaks: A True*

Story of Murder and Madness on the Evangelical Edge, and Following Our Bliss: How the Spiritual Ideals of the Sixties Shape Our Lives Today, and is the coauthor of Shopping for Faith: American Religion in the New Millennium.

Other Books

The End(s) of Time(s). Crises and end time expectations are closely linked to one another. The present volume collates interdisciplinary research from specialists in the study of apocalyptic and eschatological subjects worldwide and overcomes the existing Eurocentrism by incorporating a broader perspective.

🔗 🔗 🔗 🔗 🔗 . Howard Markel , The Kelloggs: The Battling Brothers of Battle Creek (New York: Vintage Books, 2018), chap. 6. It's hard to document an absence. The argument adduced here comes from conversations with Robert Lerner."