

The Diary of a Freshman Coed

Years later, it's all too easy to forget the pain. To forget the post-adolescent traumas, the uncertainties, the groping for identity—even to forget the feeling of release and rebellion that so often accompanies leaving home and going away to college. You were free of the parental thumb, only to succumb to a worse tyranny: your own insecurities and your own search for the meaning of your existence.

And suppose you did remember the details, all of them, the high points and the low. What then? Much of what you remembered would be as outdated on today's campus as high button shoes (please note that lace-up-the-front boots are back in style on campus but not high button shoes). But some of what you remember would be unchanged today, for no matter when a person leaves the security and/or tyranny of home, he usually finds it an emotionally gripping experience.

The transition affects the young in different ways. It probably affects men less than women, extroverts less than introverts, "doers" less than "thinkers." Whatever the effect, the traumas are real. They are endured, with tears sometimes shed—or sometimes not shed, which may be worse. The traumas are overcome. Eventually they are forgotten. Or they are remembered in good-humored nostalgia.

The document on these pages is remarkable for its youthful insight into the traumas at the moment they are happening. It is the daily journal of a freshman coed at the University of Oregon during the winter and spring terms of the 1969-70 academic year. It is an intimate, confiding kind of journal, so intimate that we have not used all of it. We have chosen excerpts that represent the range of encounters and problems and experiences and thoughts that a young girl faced during that six-month period.

We do not claim that these comments represent the "typical" freshman coed at this or any other university. Indeed, we claim just the opposite. Here is a student with both perception and the ability to express herself in writing with a rare kind of candor. Most students are far too busy living their lives, solving their problems, enjoying themselves, to have the time, let alone the ability, to write about it.

We have agreed to keep confidential her identity so as to preserve the intimate and confiding nature of the journal. We call her "Riki," a fictitious name she herself chose. (I've always liked the name Erika," she explained, "or Riki for short.") She is from a Western Oregon community we euphemistically call Valley City. Other names and a few minor details have been altered to avoid identification.

"Riki" is one of four freshmen students who participated a year ago in an OLD OREGON-initiated project. We sought out four students interested in writing and asked them to keep daily journals of their lives. We intended to quote excerpts from each: a compendium of the life and times of college freshmen. As it turned out, three of the journals were routinely factual, lacking the depth of feeling and self-analysis of Riki's effort. We abandoned the others, but encouraged Riki to continue hers through spring—through, as it turned out, one of the most violent springs in the history of the University, involving the student demonstrations precipitated by the Kent State and Cambodian events of May 1970. What follows, then, is an 18-year-old girl's view of Life during the first six months of the 1970s.

Winter 1970

December 28, 1969

Christmas Vacation. Everything is going fine here at home. I mean, my parents aren't trying to put the limelight on me anymore. The first night home my dad and I talked alone together, discussing people and their problems, and the world in general. After a long silence my dad said softly, "Yes, it's a strange world we live in Riki." His voice sounded almost like it belonged to someone else. It struck me because it sounded like something he'd think but not say. He's more or less the "strong silent type," and he rarely uses my name unless he wants my attention. Later when I got into bed I thought that I shall be very sad when my dad dies. I even wished that I could die first. The thought of him dying gave me a really vacant feeling in my stomach, almost like a hole in my insides. That was the first of a string of "death omens" that have been occurring ever since I got home.

December 29

I used to know a boy named B - - - who lived alone up on a hill. He sure was strange! He was tall and Frankensteinish. I mean, you know, he never talked or anything. I don't think I ever heard him say more than 10 words in a row. I had to sit next to him on the bus home from picking berries one time. I thought he'd melt right through the wall of the bus he tried so hard to stay away from me. I felt just miserable knowing how uncomfortable he must have been. He was very shy of girls.

He was only two years older than I but he seemed much older as I think back. He used to walk by our house sometimes when we were playing softball. We never asked him to play. Almost all the neighborhood would play but we'd never ask him. I guess it never occurred to us to ask him since he just didn't seem the type to play softball. He wasn't loud or athletic like the rest of us. He just walked by looking straight ahead. He always held his face in a pleasant smile and held his head up and looked straight ahead, like a tall, thin robot with its face cemented into a pleasant smile and no moveable parts in its neck.

Last night, he told his parents that he was going out to walk his dog. A few hours later they found him hanging by his neck from a tree. They said that he committed suicide. I wonder why he did?

It always makes me wonder when people kill themselves. You have to be awfully brave or awfully sure of your religious concepts, otherwise you might go crazy with uncertainty and not go through with it. Hanging seems like a dumb thing to do. I'd never hang myself; it's too undignified. Besides, you must get kind of panicky before you actually quit breathing. Then your face would be all contorted and ugly when they found you. Being



Illustrations by Greg Sundberg

the vain person I am, I'd rather take an overdose of sleeping pills. Then I could have them find me anyway I want—folded up nicely for packaging in the nearest coffin, decked out in a sexy nightgown, or even doing something meaningful like flipping the bird if it so suited my mood.

January 4

Back at school. I never missed home before. Not even when I first came here to the campus. I never once got homesick or cried like all my friends, but now I don't know. I may just cry! Maybe it's because I only got a 2.24 on my grades, and it depressed me horribly. The very worst grade was the "C" in writing. Maybe I can't write well. What then? *I want to write*. It's the only reason I'm here. But if I'm not good, what's the use? I may as well quit now. But what would I do then? I'd get some crummy job and end up stuck.

It appears I'm stuck, trapped, pinned between wants, needs, restrictions: the black metal gears of Life and the sharp-edged cogs of Love. Life because I have to go through all this to get what I want from Life: knowledge and the benefit of other people's experiences, and money so I need never be restricted as to where I may go or what I may do with my own knowledge. Love binds me here just as strongly. My parents never went to college and have vowed that their children will be educated. They aren't asking me too much for this one favor. At least a year, this much I owe them. And there it is. I wouldn't be more stuck if I'd planned it myself.

January 5

I felt lots better after I took a shower last night. I think I needed a little cleansing. I'm still doubtful of the importance of my college education, though. What would I do with a journalism degree if I don't plan to write for a paper? I like to play with words and connotations, so I may like something like public relations or advertising. The question is, Can I do it? A 2.24! How could *anybody* get a gpa that low?

Sometimes I wish I could junk the whole bag and head off east.

January 9

I'm kind of depressed tonight. I went with a friend to the Odyssey Coffee House, and we talked until about 1:30. It was really funny. He told me about everything that was on his mind. He kept saying, "I don't know why I'm telling you all this." Or, "Gee, I've never talked to anyone like this before." That's really dangerous because lots of times I rap with a guy who's never rapped with anyone before and suddenly he thinks he "loves" me. Why don't people realize that they can rap to anybody? Anyway, it depressed me. He has so many problems. I'm tired now, so I'll go to sleep.

January 10

I did my homework tonight like a good little girl. I think I'm getting stagnant. I guess there's a lot of people to meet here but they are usually one type. They are never here. Really. You either find people that are always drunk or always stoned. The worst thing I've ever seen is when a guy is doing something neat and beautiful, and suddenly wants to leave. Like once I was sitting in the living room of this house with a guy. We were on a soft, white rug. By the window was a green Christmas tree that filled the room with pine scent. The tree was decorated with glass ornaments and hazed with angel hair. It was warm and nice and very comfortable. And then this guy says, "Wow, I wish I was stoned." I almost threw up. Why did he want to spoil and distort it?

January 12

A friend came to see me today. She's been living with her boyfriend lately, and she spent the last two days stoned. She used to be my best friend. She keeps saying I should get stoned, which I consider a terrible insult.

All my best friends are doing that kind of stuff. My second closest friend went to Calif. State, and she lost her virginity and is on the road to alcoholism in one term. She says she does it to forget her problems. That's an alcoholic's theme song. My third best friend gets alternately stoned and drunk depending on what's available. She's really a psychotic mess for it. I feel like the only innocent left. I'm really embarrassed to say I don't smoke or drink or shoot or anything because even the straightest business ed major has at least smoked pot. But it's something I don't believe in doing. The only thing that keeps me from getting left out of conversations is that I know so much about drugs, having gone with a speed freak and a dealer at different times, and having friends who are either users or dealers. Boy, talk about a misfit! Am I ever one!

January 18

My younger sister got here Thursday so I've been pretty busy. I took her to my biology class, to the Art Museum, and to various fun places to shop or to eat. I hope she is enjoying herself. I think she's rather upset at the amount of drug use here but I tried to warn her before so she wouldn't run screaming from the first freak that offered her a joint. We went to the Student Union last night and ended up playing cards with three guys who later asked if we wanted to share some grass. I think my short "No thanks" showed her that it's easy to get out gracefully and that no one is going to try to push you into anything.

January 19

You know what really makes me mad? Those stupid SDS creeps. Today I read that they broke into President Clark's office, 30 of them (well, not exactly "broke

in"; it was open office hours). Anyway they acted like real pigs. Here's an excerpt from the *Emerald* . . . [The article relates the "demands" of the 30 students to call an emergency faculty meeting to discuss "reform" demands they earlier presented to the University]. Doesn't that just sound like a temper tantrum, something a spoiled brat would pull? I've done enough baby sitting to classify that behavior as an immature six-year-old trying to see how much he can get away with. I'm awfully tired of being represented by children such as these that claim to speak for the entire University. I wish there were something I could do—maybe even someone I could punch in the nose!

Sometimes I think of the majority of the people embodied in a huge dragon.

"You listen to me," cried the shrill voice. "I speak for the dragon and he wants me to rule because I'm nicer."

"The dragon wants things to remain as they are," came the calm reply.

"No," the voice shrieked. "The dragon wants freedom."

"What the dragon wants," the other voice said, "is security. I deal in security, and he doesn't care what I do as long as he's secure."

Suddenly, the dragon himself opens one eye, then the other. He stands up, uncoiling his long tail, and a tremendous voice rumbles from his throat, echoing off the mountains: "The dragon wants *peace!*"

January 20

My best friend thinks she might be pregnant. What a mess! Why couldn't she have taken some preventive measures? I'll be glad when she finds out for sure. It's a very strange situation because although what she did strikes me as the ultimate stupid move, I can't very well knock her for it since she has enough problems without losing me as a friend. I can't refuse to speak to her although I'm sure that's what my parents would have me do. I mean, I blame her for not using some kind of contraceptive, but my parents would blame her for the act and treat her like garbage and say I couldn't share an apartment with her. I sure hope she isn't pregnant!

January 23

In only an hour and a half I'm leaving for Portland with my roommate to spend the weekend with her in Lake Oswego. Wow, that's where all the rich status-seekers live. In the minds of the peasantry like me, the name brings visions of streets paved with gold. A group of us (their fathers' names read like the *Who's Who* of Wall Street) are going to the Bush Gardens in Portland for a dinner at about \$5 a plate. Being impoverished, my first thought was one of dismay: I've got nothing to wear. Fortunately my roommate and another Oswegan fitted me from their vast wardrobes. It's a kind of Cinderella

story. Will the spell last the whole weekend before everything turns into a zucchini squash and I become a simple little country girl again?

January 25

Wow. That was some weekend, although not too different, or as strange as I expected. I noticed an unusual amount of social drinking in the short time I was there, parents and kids alike. I always thought that when you had money you could do whatever you wanted with it, but it doesn't seem to work that way. Everybody seems to be trying to keep up with somebody else. You know, like they buy a Charger, delighting in how much better it is than so-and-so's Mustang, only to be dismayed with the fact that someone else drives a Porsche. Almost everyone has the same ego problem.

January 27

I began to think about my family, and I cried. I very rarely cry. I started thinking how nice it is whenever I go home. If it could only be that way all the time. But it is only temporary. Home is something that exists only in my mind now. I could never go back to it. My parents are really nice, but if I stayed they'd be forcing me again. I wouldn't want to live in the nest anyway after I've seen what fun flying is. That's why it's so impossible, but so beautiful, like a kind of candy you'd just love to eat but dare not because you know you'll get sick.

My friend's not pregnant, it turns out. But yesterday we had a fight. We really had it out, insulting each other all over the place. We ended up not speaking at all. She's more the "hippy" type and I'm more the "establishment" type. She digs drugs and weird clothes. I'm violently against frequent drug users and wear only the clothes that I think look good, feel good, or cover my body. It's kind of sad. We used to be such good friends, but nothing's really permanent nowadays, I guess.

February 3

This weekend when I went home I found that I had gained 10 pounds. That's a bad-bad, so I'm starting one of my highly unplanned and unorganized diets. This time I eat no breakfast, no lunch, and no dessert at dinner. If this doesn't work I'll have to go on a "Biafra Special & vitamin pill"—no food at all except a vitamin pill. That's a grueling experience but it sure works if I stick with it. Needless to say, it's not too good on your health!

February 4

Gee, it's already Wednesday and Friday I go home. It's so nice to go home where I'm *somebody*, you know, not just "a face in a crowd." When I go downtown I see people I know everywhere and they say "Hi" and they call me by name and we talk about what we've been doing. No put-ons, no fakes, no impressions to make be

use all impressions have already been made. It's my town, Valley City. I know the streets and houses; I know where to find solitude or conversation or action. I know how to get things done, who to go to, how to get around unpleasantness. Here I don't. What will I ever do when I move away? I'm certainly not going to stay and rot in Valley City!

February 10

tonight we did something rather odd. There were three of us in the room, and we began talking about each other in a very candid way, almost like one of those group therapy sessions: three people getting together and taking turns tearing each other apart. When they got to me, they both agreed that I talk too much and sometimes run subject into the ground just to get a laugh out of my audience." That was the only thing they could think of I dared to say, I don't know which. One of them added, "You're hard to figure out, Riki. At first I thought you had a happy childhood and a happy family and stuff. But then I always wondered why you didn't ever want to go home or anything. Slowly I begin to find clues in things you say. But still, you're very hard to figure out."

My roommate agreed. In fact, I agree on that point. The part about my running stories into the ground is more than true. Even I could see it, and am working on it. I get carried away sometimes. It bothers me, though, that I have nothing better to say but funny stories. I have nearly lost my ability to think. No one wants to discuss religion, life, or any kind of philosophies. So many people I talk to are pseudos, and they are out to sell, not exchange, and the rest are mindless idiots who are much easier to talk to in a hard sort of way. I'm finding communication of any sort rather poor. Even this journal is incoherent nonsense a good portion of the time.

February 15

Yesterday was Valentine's Day and everyone got cards and flowers. I got one card—slipped under the door by the girl next door. I wasn't sad, though. I've got more friends than I anticipated. Most of the girls around here I know through my roommate who is a better conversationalist than I, I'm afraid. Usually when anyone comes into the room they talk mostly to her; at least it is she who dominates the conversation. But now I guess I was wrong. So many girls stopped by to talk, show me their cards or flowers, give me a piece of their Valentine candy, or just see how I was doing. It really made me feel warm and I vowed to be more friendly in the future.

February 16

When I got home, C--- and I sat and talked for a long time. She's much better to talk to than my friend, you know, the pot-head, non-virgin who is the remains of my best friend. She's still shook up about our argument, I

guess, because she keeps dropping little remarks like, "Virgins really kill me. Running around thinking they are God just because they save their purity." How's that for a slam? I refuse to argue, though, because she has an irritating way of character slander that drives me crazy. Besides, I don't have a good offensive. Sex is not logic. The entire thing has to do with emotions and feelings dating back to the first time you heard the word. It is inconsistent, that is, it depends on circumstances.

February 18

Monday night someone said the men's PE building and ROTC storage were on fire. "Let's go!" my roommate said. When we reached the smoky building we walked around surveying it for awhile. It looked as if a giant smoke bomb were inside, and at every door firemen clustered, blanketed by the smoke. Soon it began to rain so I opened my umbrella. Somehow I had become separated from my friends, and when I found them they were soaking wet. I decided to join the group. So I put down my umbrella to feel the rain like a soft, cold shower touching me tenderly on the head and face. I can really groove on rain.

Suddenly the crowds let out a big "O-o-o-o." Turning I saw flames shooting through the roof of the building. The mood of the crowd was festive, as it had been from the beginning. I overheard one guy say, "This is the biggest social event this year." And it was: everywhere people were running into friends and talking. We stood in the pouring rain next to about eight guys cowering under two umbrellas. Finally one guy left the group, saying he was still getting wet.

"Here, take my umbrella," I said, handing him my unused umbrella. He stared at me, noticing the water dripping off my wet face and hair.

"Don't you want it?" he said, slowly checking it to make sure it wasn't booby trapped or something.

"Nope," I laughed, "I like the rain better."

"Hey, look at this," he said to one of his friends. "There she stands, soaking wet in the rain, and she hands me an umbrella that she isn't even using. She's crazy!"

His friend eyed me coolly. "She's stoned," he concluded.

Well, I like that! But I was too happy to be angry.

February 19

My friend (the pot-head non-virgin) is going to get married. I knew it a long time ago, and I think she must have too. . . .

I talked to C--- between the last paragraph and this one and we admitted that now we are the best friends that either of us have. She says it might be fun to come back our senior year and see if we can find this journal and read it together.

This journal is kind of a kill, really. Whoever reads it won't get much out of it about college. Of course, it's about my life, and college is my life, but still there aren't any specific things you can generalize on, I don't think. I call myself a writer sometimes but what comes out in this journal is pure literary garbage. I guess my mind doesn't work the way English books do, but still sometimes I have so much to say and so much emotion I'd like to transmit that I stumble all over the paper and not really come out with anything. Most of this writing is introspective which tells you lots about me but not about 18-year-olds in general. My only defense is that people my age are usually going through such struggles either consciously or unconsciously. Either they do or all my friends and I are schizos.

February 24

Homework. Once my roommate asked me if I ever said in this journal that we did our homework lest people think we're a bunch of F-destined morons. "Why should I lie?" I said. But, honestly, us do occasionally do our homework.

February 26

Vacation. Ah, how I look forward to it! I will be glad to get away from this place, sort of. Some of the people here make me really sick. I watched a rally for the Chicago Seven or Eight or whatever last week. Some speakers got up and propagandized for awhile. They asked for people from the crowd to get up and rap into the mike. A few exhibitionists got up and giggled and said a few things of interest but nothing of relevance, trying all the time to be cute or witty.

One of the leaders got up and told the crowd, "Now remember, we're mad but we don't want to do anything like throw rocks or cuss at cops, although we're mad enough to do it! The satisfaction you get from tossing a rock isn't worth the consequences. Remember, we're really mad but we won't throw any rocks."

Here was this guy telling the crowd to remember how infuriated they were and they just ate it up. The irony came when the crowd lined up to march. It was obvious, to me at least, that many participants were out on a lark.

"Nice day for a walk," I heard one girl say merrily. As the rest passed by I heard one group making plans to turn off at Penney's and another discussing the evening's kegger.

I hate to be considered a part of the same group. I'm ashamed for every riot, every unruly protest, and every irrational rationalization put forth by "my generation." Not only that, but when I hear about police beating up people, older people being abusive to young people because of their appearance, or politicians making promises as easily as they break them, lying to and using people, I feel there is no chance. There are two factions, and one

is just as sick as the other. There is a line drawn with *we* on one side and a *they* on the other, and I don't want to belong to either. Sometimes I can almost feel myself retracting into an embryonic ball and surrounding myself with thick shells. Sometimes, I don't want to have anything to do with anybody or even myself for being part of the mess.

March 2

Wow, what a weekend! So much to learn, so many games that were played and words spoken. Do I really belong here? Why do I reflect on the games rather than just play them?

Friday. Goin' home on impulse. I'm late; I'm carrying my suitcase, but I'll never make the bus station on time. Out goes the thumb. Wooosh—a big Lincoln. As I climb in the car nervously, the middle-aged man eyes me over, smirking with his watery blue eyes.

"Where are you goin'?"

"The bus depot. I have to catch a bus. Can you please take me as close as is convenient?"

"Sure," he smiles smoothly. "I'll take you right to the door. You go to school here?"

"Yes, the University."

"Be interested in a date when you get back?" A ton of bricks falls on my brain. "But, but—you're so old!" I think to myself.

"I-I don't even know when I'll be back," I manage to say.

"Oh, I'll call Monday or Tuesday." Fear, panic, confusion. "There's the bus station down the block. I'll get out here," I say, darting from the car stilled by sluggish traffic.

"Bye," I say. "And thanks."

Saturday. Saturday night in Valley City—Graveyard U.S.A. H---- was home so we decided to go to the Armory dance. We went in my car, paid \$2 to get in and left after an hour. We were driving up a street when H---- saw someone she thought she knew in another car.

"Get up to that car," she yelled. I stepped on it. It wasn't anyone she knew. Great. We took off after apologizing. But they caught up to us at a red light. "Follow us," one guy said. "We have to talk to you a minute."

We followed them down a bunch of side streets until we were quite lost. They pulled over and walked back to our car. One of them leaned his elbows on the window frame.

"Why don't you park this and come ride in a good car," he asked coolly.

"Hey, I resent that!" I said.

I glanced at H---- and saw that her mind was making the same protests as mine. "I'd better not leave the car," I lied. "It doesn't lock on one of the doors."

"Nobody will take it if you leave it under a light

Follow us and we'll park it." I rolled up my window.

"H---," I said, "do you want any part of this deal?"

"No way! I wouldn't get in their car for anything."

"Okay," I said, "then we're going to do something dirty, rotten, low down, and very likely dangerous. You with me?"

"Yeah, anything to get out of this."

The boys had already driven to the stop sign. I came up slowly behind. They turned right, and after waiting a little I turned the other way, left. I zoomed down the next left, racing in and out of residential streets, watching for headlights, not knowing where we were. We finally hit a street that would take us to town. We pushed 10 in a 30-mile zone. No lights appeared in the rear view mirror, and we said a silent prayer that all the cops in Valley City were either on coffee break or asleep. Finally we were sure we had lost our uninvited "friends," and we stopped at a drive-in doughnut shop.

There we met a friend, a guy I'd known about a year ago. We invited him over to our car, and got to talking with him. We talked for three hours, mostly about sex. This guy was a senior in high school, and he freely admitted that guys are out to get everything they can get off a girl. We told him that you could go awfully far without going all the way, without doing "the act," as it's called in mixed company.

It's very sad. The world hung up on sex. Just like those guys that tried to pick us up. They would have done anything we let them and probably more without even knowing us or caring to. It's all a big game, the same game with different styles of playing—one for the guy in my car, one for the guys that tried to pick us up, one for the man who picked me up, one for H---, and one for me. So many paths we think will lead us to happiness and satisfaction. Granted, when a girl is in college she is in a little better situation than high school. Guys can always find another girl who will, and girls can always find another guy who won't, so it's easier to say no.

Sunday. Back on campus. H--- and I went to the Student Union and were invited to a party. As it turned out, she and I were the only two girls there with a lot of guys, celebrating one guy's 21st birthday with champagne. H--- and I were made to kiss the guest of honor. I felt miserable being one of the only two girls there. I could just feel the eyes of all of them on us at all times. Finally a couple of the guys came over and one became very friendly. We talked for a long time. By one o'clock we were on the couch, "making out," as we say. Making out. That leaves a lot to the imagination, I guess. Nothing happened, that is, "the act" did not happen, and yet so much happened that as I write this my feelings are still not sorted out. It was a strange night.

The beauty of the whole situation was that there was no hurry and no real pressure. Everything was free and easy. My only regret is that I'd like to see him again but

know I won't. We only know each other's first names, and he doesn't know where I came from or where I went when I left. He's a beautiful person.

Anyway, that was my weekend, the ABC's of sex, compact style. From an old man to a young man to a college man. It's all a game; a funny, sad, desperate, but nonetheless full-time game. Maybe I'll take a course in Human Sexuality next term.

March 3

I've been in a state of mild depression ever since the weekend. It all has to do with long-ago hangups which have a painful way of snowballing into all the factors that show the futility of my life.

I've been thinking about life and death a lot lately. I'm preoccupied with it anyway, but lately some things have brought it closer. C---'s father died, and she's going on, just as usual, laughing and joking most of the time, but crying at quiet times in her room. How can I help her? I keep wondering. I wish I could somehow make it hurt less, make it less traumatic, but there is nothing I can do—nothing.

Also this weekend H--- told me she tried to commit suicide. Oh, I know she wouldn't really kill herself but she's the type to maim herself for pity. What can I do for her? How can I tell her that I think she'd better see a shrink and make her believe it? I feel so inadequate as a human being. So utterly helpless that I am powerless to do anything but harm in both these circumstances. There are people somewhere who have developed or were born with the ability to do the right thing in these situations. Why not me? I just wish, I just wish.

I have thought quite a bit about the guy I met Sunday night. I've been studying all this term and have only gotten the bare minimum of my "love quota." I had forgotten just how nice passion is. The night was very beautiful. The deal is, there are too many hangups that come after. You know, should I have been more prudish? Did I go too far? Does he think I'm cheap? Does he care for me as a person? I am not an object and I refuse to be used as one, so rather than admit that I have been, I'd prefer to rationalize. He's a wonderful person and I won't think bad of him. He's got very expressive eyes that light up and say all kinds of things. He's nice, very nice, and I like to think about him, the things his eyes say and the way he kisses. He's so tender and sweet. It depresses me, though, that I'll never see him again.

March 13

I guess Friday the 13th is as good a day as any to end this journal. I could get sentimental over a thing as dumb as the last page of a journal. I'll probably keep a journal from now on, anyway; it's fun.

In retrospect, I've learned a lot this term, more than just from books and classes. I think I have formed some

DIARY (continued)

new opinions and broken some old ones. Everyone in this University is my own private tutor, and I almost wish I could thank them for the things they teach me.

This term will never be repeated because a different person is writing now than the one who was scrawling on the first page. It is kind of heart-warming to have it preserved on paper. I feel it depicts a time of conflict and isolation that was evident not only in me but most of the second-term freshmen I know.

This dorm, too, has a character. It reflects the isolation and alienation of the girls who live here. Most of them are still unable to confide in each other. They prefer to

merely knife each other in the back. The group never got together as one unit as I hoped it would. The people who live here still carry on as if the place belongs to them alone, dirtying the bathroom and halls, and making undue noise without concern. Oh, well, is that any different than life in general? I'm afraid that is the problem of our whole society—everyone watches out for himself. And why not? Nothing you do affects anyone as much as it does you.

To whoever has to wade through this inane jungle of words: you have my deepest sympathy. May the next journal you read be more coherent and relevant.



Spring 1970

April 24

Did I write last term that I'd probably continue this journal through spring term? Yes. How foolish I was. I tried to write, but things were coming too fast for me. It was not until now that I've had a chance to catch my breath. When I got back after vacation, suddenly I was in the middle of the "crowd" that H - - - hangs around with. I was more or less initiated into the group when one of the "leaders," M - - - , decided I was cute and could be his girl friend. This "group," seven to ten of us, do all kinds of things together. They mostly get stoned together. M - - - is one of the more dominant members and tends to "rule" quite a bit. When he decided he liked me, I was instantly in the center of things. The first full week of school I went to two parties at his house and spent a weekend at Siuslaw Falls. We sang and ran around the woods all weekend. Everybody got stoned and was that way the entire weekend. Since I didn't want to smoke any, I spent long hours walking in the woods alone or sitting in good climbing trees.

They were always trying to get me stoned, but I refused. However, I found as I observed them that they had a unique reason for smoking dope, one that I had never grasped before. They smoke for entertainment. Strange. Turn on your body to entertain your mind. It's comparable to a roller coaster ride. There is the same element of danger but the fear is overcome by the lust for thrills. The more I thought about it, the more it sounded like a good reason. If one was willing to pay the price he could go on a roller coaster ride for an evening. I decided I had to try it to see what it was like. Besides, I felt I had to get stoned at least once so I could understand this breed of people better.

I informed my friends that the Great Abstinence was now ready to participate.

There began a huge movement to get me stoned. First they taught me to smoke a cigarette so I could handle a joint. Then they got some grass and attempted to get me stoned. However, it usually takes about six times before the average person gets stoned so I didn't get high. I did get rather drunk, though, on the wine. A few days later I went with a guy to M - - - 's house and smoked three J's, and by the first puff of the third I was up. It was a very strange feeling, like I was under water or in cotton. I didn't especially like it. Something in the back of my mind was trying to keep me acting civil but my body wasn't responding. For one who is used to having strict command of her body at all times, I was pretty uncomfortable. Since then I haven't smoked. I won't either, unless someone else is paying for it. I kinda want to do it again to see if I can retain control and see if it's different than the last time.

That brings us up to date for now. I'll probably go back to that subject again some time. It fascinates me.

In more recent "news," there are the riots. Let me begin by admitting that I am deathly afraid of crowds in this kind of situation. Crowds make me nervous anyway, but when they are in a march or a demonstration, they frighten me to insanity. However, I am very curious—more than I am scared. That should help to explain why I get into odd situations.

Wednesday was the first riot as I remember. That night I was at the Student Union with my friends. ROTC had been voted in by the faculty that afternoon by a 14-vote margin, and some people had already rioted around the ROTC building. The feeling around the SU was tense and quiet. Slowly, people gathered on the terrace. It was like watching some strange TV program on a Ku Klux Klan meeting or something. Later I was leaving the SU and I heard shouts and cheers from the other side of the building. I pushed forward, around the building, my curiosity aroused. But at the corner a guy grabbed my arm.

"Don't go that way, Sister; they have tear gas." I retreated, and went home.

Since that night all kinds of things have been going on, and I have taken part in many of them. I wasn't around for the Johnson Hall gassing, but I spent most of the night there before it. The trouble is, I don't support the cause, but it's so much like a party. M - - - was there, and wanted me to stay with him. There was no harm, I thought, in just sitting around talking, and it was such a party atmosphere I wasn't even afraid of the group. I did leave, however, when they started smoking dope. I wasn't going to get busted just for a few kicks.

The night of the strike I stayed home as long as I could. But soon curiosity got the best of me, so I went to the SU where about 1,000 people had gathered and, drunk with power, were making demands. I sat with all my friends but some of us got sick at the lack of logic in the crowd. The speakers all got up and said nothing but said it in such a way that it aroused the group. "We students are tired of being treated like niggers. We're through being f - - - - over by the University." That term seemed appropriately indefinite, and no one bothered to tell us exactly what it was that we were upset about. They just told us we were upset.

One guy got up and asked for peace saying that we have to think of the community and be careful not to alienate them because we need their help. Another guy got up and said, "F - - - the community; the community gassed us this afternoon!" (Radicals have a passion for inserting all the filth they can into one sentence.) Then a girl got up and said that it wasn't the community that gassed us, it was the "pigs." She said the "Pigs are our enemies . . . they want to destroy us," which brought a defiant roar from the audience. From then on, reasons

were forgotten. The important motif seemed to be to "win." It was a very poor display of human emotions unchecked by logic.

The entire situation is really sad. People don't understand each other. There was no logic behind the gassing of peaceful demonstrators, just as there was no logic behind the throwing of bottles and rocks Wednesday night. The speakers talk and talk and talk but no one listens. The administrators are tied in red tape and the kids are all stoned, drunk, or just don't care. It's the biggest farce I've seen in a long time.

April 25

This term has really messed up my head. I've semi-decided that I'd better stay home and wash my hands of the whole strike thing. It upsets me to be any part of it. But I learn so much from the people that I hate to lock myself away from it. The worlds I exist in keep clashing. I want to go to the sit-ins and parties because they are fun and my friends are all there. Then I come home to my dorm friends and they listen to me tell about the riots. They don't go, though, because they aren't radical. I'm not radical either, but I'm being lumped in with them, and people think I am. Then my other friends, the old friends I used to know from home, worry about me and say I'm going to the dogs and they have to help me straighten out.

So I have three conflicting groups of friends. Then when I go home I find my family. They still think their sweet baby studies her nights away unaware and unaffected by "those damn hippy faggots."

So here I stand in the confused maw of a hurricane, wondering what to do next. I'm disgusted with everything. I don't want to live the dull life of virtue expected by my parents, nor the Lady of Shallot life of my dorm friends, and I'm not really satisfied with the underground world of my radical friends. I'm tired of being used, molded, ordered and generally treated like an object. I'm sick of greasy guys propositioning me, and people judging and categorizing me. Egad, next thing you know I'll be turning into a hermit!

April 27

I talked last night with my friend who's getting married. I kind of envy her—not that she's getting married, but that she has a guy who loves her and she loves him. She talks most of the time about her "man," while my life is still hung up in insecure relations with a bunch of different guys. I'm still an "object" to most guys I know.

April 28

I am quickly becoming disgusted with the human race. The entire drug scene is a real downer. Lots of people do it for entertainment, but I can't. When I get stoned it's like I'm asleep, and then I feel I've wasted all that time

by not being here. It's the feeling I get when I sleep too much.

I see by today's headlines the strike is continuing. It's so crazy now; nobody knows what's happening. Anyway, I'm tired of wild-eyed idealists trying to tell me this strike is saving the world.

A really weird thing happened the other night. This guy that I had met once before came up to see me at the SU. In a very short time he had his arm around me and was holding my hand. He was drunk *and* stoned. After a few unsuccessful escape attempts, I tried to sober him up with a little coffee. He kept saying he liked me very much. He held my hand, gazed across the table into my eyes, and in all seriousness asked me to marry him. This *idiot!* I had seen him only twice in my life, both times when he was drunk. And he sat there and asked me to marry him! What kind of moron did he take me for? I wonder what would have happened if I'd said yes.

April 29

I've made a lot of decisions today. First and foremost, I've decided that drugs just are not my kind of thing. I have a hard enough time grasping reality without making it even more slippery.

I've also decided that the SU crowd is definitely out. I've been trying to "fit in" to their lives. I've made the mistake of conforming and worrying about what they think of me. I don't like to be that way. I don't like their opinions of me and their attempts to make me more like them.

I've resolved to learn from everything that has happened this term, and now to try life above ground. I'll even go to all my classes.

Suddenly, tonight, while I was walking home in the rain from Shakespeare class, I realized how beautiful it was to be a Riki T - - - and alive. The street was shiny, the leaves sparkled, the air was crisp. Everything looked so beautiful through unstoned senses. I began to sing. There weren't many people out, mostly just me, the night, and the rain. I hummed and skipped and soaked my tennis shoes in mud puddles. I ran up to a girl in front of me and asked her if she wanted to share my umbrella. We were both laughing by the time she had to turn off. Then a guy walked by, and I smiled and said "Hi." He looked surprised and broke into a big grin, returning the greeting. When I got home I was feeling awfully good. Then I found an invitation to get stoned waiting for me. No way! I'm a Riki T - - - and alive tonight and the last thing I need is grass!

April 30

I called my parents the other night. I'm going home Saturday. Back in sterile Valley City they really think this campus is falling apart. They were horrified that the students barricaded 13th Street. They had the at-

...ude that "those commie pinko perverts should be
hot." They think the life of every student is in danger,
but, really, it only affects those who want to be affected.
The strike is dying out, anyway. They didn't get re-
sults fast enough, and people are losing interest because
it's not violent enough. It's funny, but as I write this a
song comes on the radio, something about "Battle lines
being drawn, nobody's right if everybody's wrong . . ." I
can't remember the rest except the phrase, "Paranoia
strikes deep . . ."

It's by the Buffalo Springfield, and it hits me as kind
of the strike "theme song" of the year. This entire move-
ment is bathed in music, fast, loud, hard-pounding music.
It reflects the feelings of the people and helps them to
escape from thinking awhile. It really releases tension.
I think the next time they begin to riot on ROTC, Presi-
dent Clark should just set up a band there rather than
a line of cops.

President Nixon is on the radio now, something about
Cambodia. I'd better listen.

My God. What a mess! Now we're going into Cam-
bodia. We're going to be there forever.

. . . Okay, I've just listened to Nixon. What's all this
trash about saving face? We lost the respect of the
world a long time ago if, indeed, we ever did have it.

Damn it!

I don't understand all this stuff about not letting
ourselves get humiliated or defeated. Good God, we al-
ready are!

Besides, if we're in there for personal glory, we're
there for the wrong reasons.

It's the same with the college strikers. I heard several
say, "We won't take down the barricades. That would
be admitting defeat."

My problem is I don't know the whole story, and I
can still see both sides. After all, if I was some Cam-
bodian peasant, I wouldn't want someone to cut out just
as the going gets tough. But maybe they *want* to be
communists. Maybe they don't want us there. I don't
trust the government to tell me anything true. I always
get the feeling that the public gets fed a formula of a
bare minimum of truth mixed well with political propa-
ganda and pacifying rhetoric. What a rotten world. I
wish we were playing with cards, chessmen, or pin balls
rather than peoples' lives.

May 1

Last night we had a minor panty raid. The girls from
our dorm went over to two of the boys' dorms and swiped
their underwear and littered the halls with feathers from
butchered pillows. The guys retaliated, and were met
with water and feathers as they tried to climb up the
fire escape stairs.

In the middle of the whole thing I got a phone call
from M - - - - asking me to a pot party. I decided to go

but to avoid both the pot and M - - - -. Dear M - - - - has
lost my favor of late. He totally ignores me by day, but
when night comes and he gets horny he can be very nice.
Consequently I have been dehumanized to an object,
which is one thing I refuse to take. For me, love is a lot
more than sex, and a purely sexual relationship is no
relationship at all. I very carefully avoided M - - - - the
entire evening. I think he was a little stunned. Why
should his cuddly teddy bear suddenly rebel like this?
Poor M - - - -.

May 3

I just got back from home. Oh, boy. All day I listened
to the problems of my family. My dad had been un-
reasonable again and this upset my sister to the point
where she almost ran away. She ended up not speaking
to him for a week. My mom and dad have been in count-
less inane arguments since I was last home, and now that
my brother has his driver's license he stays away as much
as possible.

The painful part is how am I supposed to go home and
observe all this and come back to school unaffected? The
entire situation makes me sick. But there is absolutely
nothing I can do. Damn! I'm depressing myself to the
point of tears.

May 4

Well, today finds me in the same happy mood I was in
last night. It would help maybe if I cried. Then maybe
my stomach would quit hurting. But I can't.

Darn. I wish I had someone to talk to; the loneliness
is as achey as the problem. But no one could understand,
even if they tried. The whole family situation goes way
back. No one can really understand the impact this fami-
ly situation has on me. People just think I'm hypersensi-
tive and that I'm overreacting. How can I ask another
human being to understand me when I can't even pre-
tend to understand myself? So why don't I just forget it?
Okay?

Okay.

Why doesn't my stomach quit hurting? How come I
can't eat or sleep? Look, I give up. This entire entry has
been trash.

May 5

I've been lying in bed all morning doing stupid but neces-
sary things, like creaming my legs and redoing my toe-
nail polish. I also read the *Emerald*, a mistake in itself.
The most nauseating part was the stuff about the four
Kent students that were shot down. What a rotten world
this turns out to be when people shoot other people down.
The whole situation was bad. The students shouldn't
have been so pushy. Why do such unreasonable, un-
excusable acts go on every day? Doesn't anyone think
anymore, or did they ever?

... Later. I have ventured outside and find I'm not the only one who awoke this morning out of merciful sleep to the sick reality of today's world. Everyone is looking at the Kent story with shocked horror. Here I sit with a pile of biology notes trying to remember the structure of a gametophyte for a midterm tonight. What if I get caught in the crossfire of a riot? What good will a gametophyte do me then? It's so unreal sitting here comfortably putting so much importance on learning plant structure for a miserable test while outside people are dying, being murdered, shot down for no reason. I study for that test, for that grade, for that diploma that will send me out into a world that has died while I had my nose in a book of yesterday's facts.

There is a rally tonight about the Kent incident and the Cambodian Blunder, so I think I'll go and see if we can do something constructive. In the meantime, my biology takes the place of highest importance, I'm sorry to say.

May 6

Last night they were going to have a candlelight march for the Kent State dead, and tons of people showed for it. I stood in the crowd trying to hear the speakers so I could figure out how violent the crowd was going to be. But from where I was standing I could hear nothing, so I left with a friend on his Honda 350. Later I heard that some people ended up throwing rocks at ROTC. What a bunch of dummies! Why ROTC? That has nothing to do with four murdered students or Nixon's stupid move of the year. The student leaders said that anyone wishing to keep the peace should come to the front. People did, and the students themselves actually stopped the riot. That's beautiful, really beautiful.

Now it's later in the day. I went to the SU and there was the most fantastic thing I had ever seen. There were lots of people outside, maybe a hundred or two, and a speaker up on the platform addressing them. But the beautiful thing was they weren't listening. They were all in little groups of about two to twenty, talking. They weren't arguing or BSing; they were talking, trying to make each other feel what they were feeling.

Sharing, communicating, listening, that's what.

These two guys came walking up next to me and one stopped. "Now look," he said, "we've tried the non-violent trick and it doesn't work. The biggest problem with this is that the government is not trying to keep us in Viet Nam for the people there. Hell no, they have us in there for our own economy. Sure, they're stuffing their pockets on this war."

The other guy made some reply that I didn't catch, but then he said, "Oh, my God, I have to get to sociology. Look, I'd like to finish this later; you going to be around?"

"Sure." They shook hands. "It was sure nice meeting you."

I'd have guessed that they were best of friends instead of strangers. But everyone seemed linked with that special bond among people facing the same problem.

Later I attended a rally in the EMU ballroom where they had several speakers, one of which was a black militant who said, in so many words, that the only way to make our demands take effect is to pick up a gun and support them, the blacks. When the blacks get what they want, all they have to do is turn those same guns on the whites of the world, he said, and the world will live black and happily ever after. That scares me. I wonder if I'll ever see the day people exterminate one entire race by full-scale slaughter. I hope not.

May 7

Today is the first day of the strike, or the vacation, depending on how you look at it. President Clark closed school for two days but some departments are staying closed for longer. Lots of students went home last night or cut out for the beach.

I've decided to go up to Portland tonight and spend tomorrow looking for a job for summer.

My mom called me and wanted to talk to me about Parents Weekend this weekend. I think they are afraid to come down, and maybe afraid for me. I guess they think I'll get shot down like the Kent students.

May 11

Today is Mother's Day when the women of the world are honored for being biologically capable of reproducing. Today is also the time when people beat people up, stab them, and arrest them for calling attention to something they think is important. For trying to change things. For trying to communicate. I recall my sister saying how the Kent students deserved to get shot, what else could the Guardsmen do? I remember my dad grinning and pointing to the news story on how some 1,000 construction workers in N.Y. went after demonstrators with crowbars and wrenches while police stood by. I still hear my mom chuckling about the 11 students bayoneted in New Mexico. Givin' 'em what they deserve. How blind can they be? Doesn't it arouse horror and repulsion in the soul to read that people are beating, stabbing, and shooting people for trying to communicate? How can they possibly miss seeing the sadness of this? Are they too short-sighted to see that when one "side" is repeatedly attacked they find it necessary to arm themselves in defense? Can't they see what that would mean?

I feel sick sometimes to see how the world is polarizing young against old. I really mean "new against old," or "change against tradition." It's like one side is full of idealists who are screaming, "Look, just look what we're doing in our blindness!" The other side, happy in its ignorance, growls, "Don't make waves. If you just shut up and concentrate on breathing and keeping your stom-

...full, things will take care of themselves."

Neither side hears the other nor cares to.

May 13

It's sunny outside. Hurrah! If I had one wish it would be to be on a desert island far away from classes, Viet Nam, Cambodia, and university violence. I went to the meeting last night in which the students decided to strike. Now I'm faced with the big decision. Which is more important and worthwhile to me, classes or "the movement"? If I throw myself into the war against the war, I'll do it all the way and give up classes. The trouble is, I don't know how much the strike will accomplish. I get the feeling we're just digging ourselves deeper into the ground by arousing hostility from the older people. If we alienate them, all is lost. They are already fairly alienated so I'm beginning to think the strike is a waste.

Besides, I'm a child of the "Great Society." For almost 19 years it's been drilled into me: "You do not question; you do not make waves; you do not ask. You just do and make money and more money and the money will set you free." So it's hard to just flick school and dive into the revolution.

But how can I call myself a human being if I just sit here while people are getting killed and maimed, both at home and in some steaming jungle? In three years my brother will be "ripe for slaughter" according to the U.S. government, and I don't want to see him off to Viet Nam.

And should I calmly shake my head in sorrow to see people beaten to the ground by cops and National Guard?

What can I possibly do? I'd like to work on the strike news staff, since the newspapers are hiding everything that happens. What is a poor innocent Valley City girl to do? One thing's for sure. Valley City doesn't prepare a mind for anything like this. Valley City is a breeding ground for bigots. An older woman once told me she thought Valley City was a dying town because when the young get old enough to break away, they run, never to return. Lots of parents move to Valley City because they think it's a quiet, safe place to raise kids. How can anyone be equipped to handle violence when they come from a town where violence is a rarity? In my high school, 2,000 students, we had students from both the highest and lowest rent districts, but not a single black.

May 16

I have a problem with flirting. Even I admit that I'm the biggest flirt around. I went to a party last night, and R---- was at the party and so was the girl that likes him, J---. Well, R---- was extremely friendly to me that night and it wasn't long before we were joking and teasing around. J---'s friend, S-----, supposes herself to be a witch, and so I guess she tried to put the hex on me. She's always talking about how she casts spells by the light of the moon and all that. Whenever anything

extraordinary happens, she says she caused it, but I don't believe her. I could see her eyeing me, obviously cooking up a spell for me, just for the sake of zapping J---'s worst enemy. How absurd! But they both obviously believed in witchcraft and thought it would "get" me.

I slipped away from the party for two hours, walked alone through the streets, then started running. It felt good to run, leaving those awful people at the party. It was 3 a.m. when I returned.

"Where were you?"

"I went to get a drink of water," I smiled, and they knew they'd get no better answer from me. The rest of the evening went just fine. I ignored the puzzled looks and also the savage glances of the "witch." I decided that I'd better stay away from those people from now on. I like R----, and would love to know him better, but when they all start playing little witchcraft games, that's the end.

May 17

Ugh, I just finished reading the *Sunday Oregonian* editorial page filled with letters from readers. Most people congratulated the cops for their handling of the Portland State hospital tent incident where students were beaten down to the ground. How can they think it's good when people are injured? They filled their letters with emotional idioms like "silent majority," "communist inspired," and "hippy radicals." They seemed to think the demonstrators were just trying to make trouble with no particular motive in mind, or that they were communists trying to overthrow the government, or that they were just on a stoned rampage. The trouble is, that's true of maybe some individuals but it's not fair to say the whole effort is founded on those reasons.

May 18

A very strange thing happened last night. A guy called and asked me out (very strange in itself!). But the strangest thing is, he's been watching me for the last two terms. For some reason I attracted his attention one day and ever since he's been watching everything I do. He knows how often I come into the SU and how much I used to come in. He watched me learn how to smoke and even watched me get drunk that night at the SU during the strike. He'd sit at tables near mine so he could listen to conversations with and about me. He almost knows more about me than I do. After sitting around observing me two full terms, he just now gets around to speaking to me with only about three weeks left of school. That's what I call strange!

Three weeks of school left! Egad. I don't even have a summer job lined up yet. I'm totally unprepared for the end of the term. I have two projects I haven't even begun yet, and a final I know nothing for.

College life is one trauma after another. They make it

that way. How can you have a stable life when you have to recycle through registration, midterms, finals, and grades every term?

I don't suppose I ever made a conscious decision last week about dropping out of classes for the strike. I just went on going to classes, some of them anyway, muddling through in my usual slipshod manner.

May 19

I changed my Western Civ. grade option to pass, no-pass. I fully intended not to pass the course, but I called the teaching assistant and asked if I could take the final as a token for the time and money we both spent. He gave me enough encouragement to try for a pass. I think he wants me to pass as much or more than I do. I'd feel like a sap letting him down. We need more teachers like that who sympathize and urge you on rather than the reverse: "Go ahead and flunk."

I'm doing so poorly, and there are only three more weeks of school. Sometimes I almost wish I could drop out, drop dead, or drop acid—three stupid forms of retreat.

No, really, I couldn't even consider any one of those. All three are cop-outs. I already do my share of refusing to face reality without going into a full-scale escalation plan.

May 20

I spent most of the day standing in line for a job interview. There were so many people. I'll never get the job, I bet. Nothing beats at your ego the way job hunting does. It makes me feel so inadequate and misplaced. I have zero usable talents except a strong will and body and the ability to learn.

Never in my entire life has my future been so uncertain. Never before have so many variables threatened my happiness. I know my parents want me to live at home but that would drive me up the walls. What if I can't find a job out of Valley City, though? I won't work in the cannery. I will *not*. I'll pick berries until I get a job at a hamburger joint.

I feel a terrible change taking place. I see that I'm slipping so far away from my parents and family that I'll never be able to get back. I feel guilt and uncertainty that what I'm doing is right.

May 22

Well, I talked to my mom last night and got a letter from her today, and it looks like I'm in for a fight when I get home. They are going to try to make me work in the cannery. The pay is good, and I can live at home and use the car and not have to pay food or rent. What more could I ask? All I have to do is give up my freedom and sanity. How could I go back to Valley City to the domination of my parents after coming as close as I have to

independence? Is it fair to snatch the cup of life from my hands the moment it touches my lips? Oh, God, I'm being overdramatic! I could survive if I had to, I suppose.

May 26

With all I've been worrying about lately—grades, getting a job, family problems—why did I get myself into my latest trauma? Now some guy has decided to become infatuated with me. Very flattering, granted, but the last thing I need now is the true love sob story. I don't mind an "affair" every once in a while, you know, those temporary things that mount up to an ego trip for each person involved, but when someone tells me he loves me, that's where I cut out. I've spent all my life under the rule of one person or another and I don't intend to give up the small grain of freedom I've clawed and scraped for to the first clown who comes along.

But he says he loves me. What do I do? What a funny word. It used to mean something, didn't it? I guess Webster knows what, but I don't want to look it up. I see it all the time anyway: on bathroom walls or at bloody student demonstrations. Sure, love is everywhere. But I guess it means more than that. Doesn't it mean more when it comes from the full, sensuous lips of a lover, trying to get his fill of his companion's body before he dumps her back in the street where he found her? Maybe not. Maybe there are lots of words that were once beautiful and fragrant but have been thrown into the gutter and trampled on until they are soiled beyond recognition. I'm a bitter old bitch! I guess love means something to someone, somewhere, but it means little to me now. Perhaps one day my thoughts will change. I certainly hope so.

May 28

Prepare yourself; I plan to make some wide, sweeping generalizations in this entry. I've made a point of talking to lots of kids my age and I've found several parallels of thought. I assume these feelings are not just restricted to kids in Oregon.

The key word to sum up the feelings of today's youth is "frustration." We have no voice in the government, or a small one at best because many of us are under 21. In an attempt to get things done, violence was tried and it received harsh backlash in the recent vote and in various other ways. But violence did more than that. Now many are saying "Violence is bad, but it works; it's the only voice we have." I'd like to go on record as issuing a warning to anybody and everybody who cares to listen: watch out. The people of this country are "up against the wall." Everyone is trying to justify his position. The adults try to tell the kids to shut up and let them live in ignorance. They don't want to cope with what's going on in Viet Nam or what's happening in ecology and population and pollution.

The kids are just as guilty of escape. However they

can't just shut their eyes like the adults do because they already know what the problems are. They have to live with the results of this war and the destruction of the world. Some, more than I ever would have guessed, are willing to renounce their citizenship and leave the country. Some can't afford to leave, so their out is taken mentally: drugs. Everywhere kids are bombarded with not only the personal problems of everyday life and interactions, but they see their future being destroyed. Everything lies frustratingly beyond immediate action, like an itch in an unreachable place. Any attempt to get rid of these torments is foiled in one way or another. Rioting and demonstrating only cause friction and polarization. We are told, "That's not the way," but we are never told what is the way.

So what does the concerned but frustrated student do? He goes home and says, "I want to get ripped out of my mind!" He smokes a nickel bag or a gram or maybe he drops a tab or a couple of caps and—pow! Nothing matters anymore.

I've thought of leaving the country, but the problems are not confined to this country. I've tried drugs, too, but I always know when I come down it will be in the same place, and I refuse to be up all the time just to avoid coming down.

So I decided to try a new trick. Facing it and watching, helping in any way that I can. It doesn't make me feel noble; it's pure hell. If I had my way I'd blow my brains out. But I'm not that way, and I'll face the circumstances, watch and wait, not especially by choice but by the force of the "lesser of all evils" theory.

Somehow, though, I know I won't have to watch and wait long. Can't you feel it? Hear it? The sound of a burning fuse. I can.

June 2 (my birthday)

My roommate and I went with two guys to Siuslaw Falls yesterday to go swimming. We took some grass laced with THC, a synthetic marijuana, and smoked a couple of joints, then went swimming. The water felt so silky and smooth, like silk with no folds in it. It was so fantastic I wanted to stay there the whole night but we had to get out before we all got exhausted and drowned. So we got out and decided to smoke another joint. We smoked the joint and suddenly I was zonked. I was numb all over and couldn't taste or smell. It was impossible to focus my eyes or anything. I could hear people, but only their voices, not their words. I couldn't even hear myself talking. In short, all my senses were essentially zilched. What do you have left when you take away all the senses? Nothing. I felt all alone, but not even with myself. My mind had scattered, and all that was left was the piece that held it together, groping for the other pieces, frantically trying to pick them all up and arrange them again. It was as though you'd been working on a jigsaw puzzle

and then someone came along and kept kicking it apart while you were trying to save it.

It was about three in the morning when I began to come down. Slowly my skin tingled back to life, voices became less garbled, I could see again. I slipped back into my body like a hand into a glove.

It was my birthday and I was born again. Suddenly I realized the stupidity of running away from my body. My body is not my problem. It's not much, but it's all I've got. Born 19 years ago today, equipped with five good senses and ready to use them to face the world. They are my only receptors, my only weapons against this place in which I live; why do I want to weaken them? Nineteen years ago today I was slapped to life, ignited by my sense of touch, and this machine that houses my mind was plugged in and ready to use. Only five senses to help me survive, to feed knowledge into my brain, and build a mind. They protect me, entertain me, teach me, help me; why do I want to shut them off? From now on, I'll never touch drugs again. I feel I owe it to my body to let it do its work in its own natural way. Happy birthday to me.

June 3

Yesterday was the most memorable birthday I've ever had. I wonder if I should ever tell my parents about my drug escapades. Probably not. It would be nice to tell them, to share what happened with them. But even though it's in the past they'd worry. They'd feel it was their place to scold. Parents always underestimate your power to benefit from experiences. Maybe I'm too hard on them, but I'd rather just not mention it than run the risk of having them blow up. One girl told me that parents make their kids lie because they make such a big thing out of the truth. I wonder if she's right. Poor parents; they are only human, subject to all human emotions and frailties yet we ask them to be perfect.

June 4

Almost too busy to think today. That's good. I think too much anyway. Things could be so much happier if I just did everything without thinking. Then I could fill this journal with endless epics, like, "Up at eight, went to class today, ate lunch, went to another class, ate dinner, brushed teeth, went to bed." The trouble is, I don't think I could hack it. Life would be dull without deviating traumas every day.

June 8

My roommate and I were discussing last night whether or not we had changed much this year. She has changed quite noticeably, but neither of us thought I had changed much.

I guess I haven't made many basic changes, but I've learned and experienced very much, very fast. I feel much

DIARY (continued)

older and wiser than I was, but I still feel young and innocent compared to most people. I envy many people for having seen and done so much.

June 11

Ta-da! My last day in this dorm. Last day of my first year of school. And it was a struggle getting through.

Things are looking fairly bright for the summer. I still don't have a job but I'm really trying. I'm going home. My family situation is looking better. I can have the little car weekends if I agree with my brother for it. Things are coming out okay. I'd write more but I have so many things to finish before I leave. Good-bye thanks!

