

# Woodstock Festival: Catalyst For Counterculture?

Rachel Shook

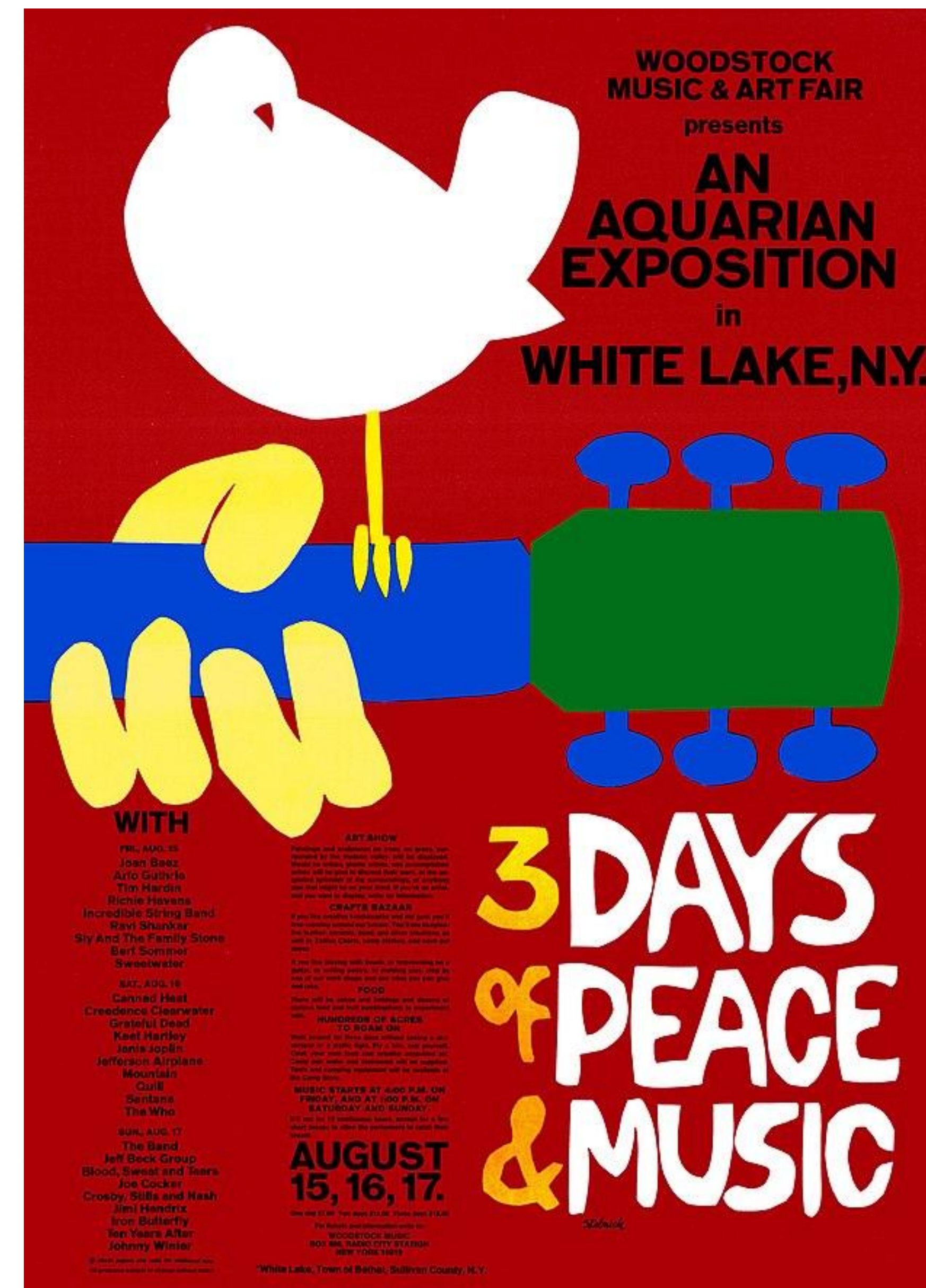
## INTRODUCTION

For many, Woodstock was much more than just a music festival, as it encapsulated the revolution necessary to evolve the culture in which led the nation for several generations. This festival acted as an affirmation for the powers of peace, love, and unity to break barriers and change the lives of many. Although the festival only lasted seventy-two hours, its legacy remains empowering to the enduring spirit of the sixties, which was a brief but powerful period when dreams of a better world seemed close to the grasp of many, if only for a fleeting moment in time.

This begs the question of whether or not Woodstock truly was a pivotal moment embodying the necessary societal movement of the time into three briefs days of community and celebration, or if Woodstock was a distant and cherished memory in the minds of young Americans that stood out in popular memory far beyond its true implications in the efforts of the counterculture movement. There is a stark divide by many historians regarding the true trajectory of the festival and whether or not it truly achieved its initial message that its founders intended, or if it was just a distant memory that became much more glamorized than it truly was.



Picture taken on 17 August 1969 at the Woodstock Music and Art Fair.  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Woodstock\\_Music\\_and\\_Art\\_Fair.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Woodstock_Music_and_Art_Fair.jpg)



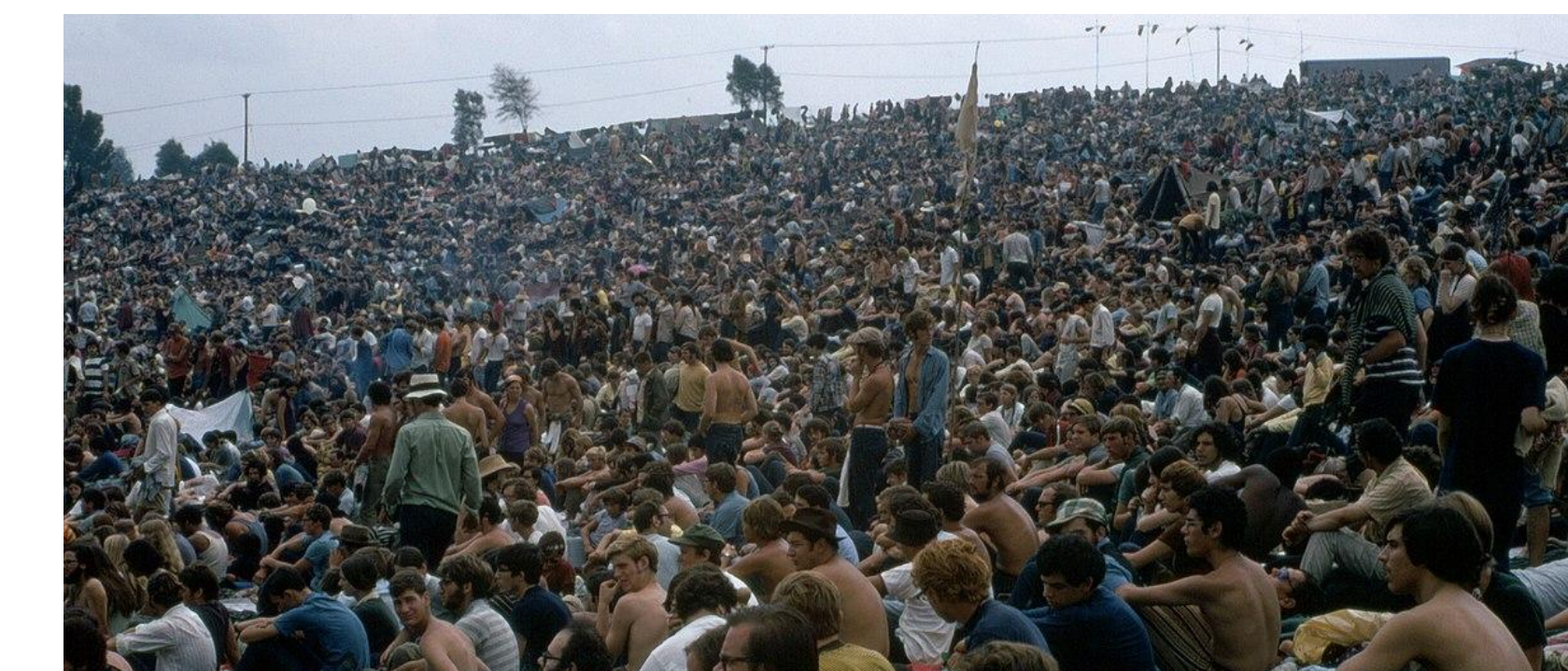
An advertisement poster for the Woodstock Festival, 1969.  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Woodstock\\_poster.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Woodstock_poster.jpg)

## SIGNIFICANCE

In exploring Woodstock's legacy and historiographical documentation, it allows the reflection of its influence on the generations to follow and its resonance in the modern world. This ultimately represents the power of Woodstock's messages regarding unity, peace, and music in developing discourse, as this remains a hot-button topic by historians examining the twentieth century. The many viewpoints of Woodstock continue to be argued from those who lived through this period in American history.

## SANTANA VS DALTREY

In Carlos Santana's autobiography, he delves into the stream of events that shaped the longevity of his musical career, along with his band. Carlos Santana expands on various aspects of his musical career and how each event in his life led into the height of his fame and success as an artist in his autobiography. One of the top noteworthy moments from his career that he credits to his success is his live performance in the Woodstock festival. Santana also gives his overall account regarding the Woodstock festival, describing his thoughts on what made Woodstock different from other notorious festivals. Santana explains what Woodstock meant for those who attended as well as the rest of the nation, stating that during this time, Woodstock was composed of a generation with an agenda, and performers were the voices they needed. Despite the appraisal of Woodstock's outcome from Carlos Santana, there remains criticisms from those who were arguably just as successful in attendance of the festival. British singer of The Who Roger Daltrey covers his experiences being rather negative, despite the publicity they received as a result of their performance. Daltrey's complaints revolve around the lack of payment received for their performance at the event and the traffic conflicts with trying to reach the venue. However, despite his negative experiences, Daltrey does not deny the influence that Woodstock had for the careers of several artists performing at Woodstock and the imprint these performances left on the crowds.



Looking toward the back of the field at Woodstock. August 16 1969.  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Looking\\_toward\\_the\\_back\\_of\\_the\\_field\\_at\\_Woodstock.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Looking_toward_the_back_of_the_field_at_Woodstock.jpg)

## REFERENCES

- Bartkowiak, Mathew J., and Yuya Kiuchi. *The Music of Counterculture Cinema: A Critical Study of 1960s and 1970s Soundtracks*. Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2015.
- Cottrell, Robert C. *Sex, Drugs, and Rock "n" Roll: The Rise of America's 1960s Counterculture*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015.
- Daltrey, Roger. *Thanks a Lot, Mr. Kibblewhite: My Story*. New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company, 2018.
- Isserman, Maurice, and Michael Kazin. *America Divided: The United States in the 1960's*. New York City, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Santana, Carlos. *The Universal Tone: Bringing My Story to Light*. Edited by Ashley Kahn and Hal Miller. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2015.