BURNERS, DISCORDIANS, RAINBOWS

SIGNALS from the Counterculture

counter-culture

a way of life and set of attitudes opposed to or at variance with the prevailing social norm.

Eric Kingsbury
Houston Foresight
Spring Gathering April 2018
Three Tribes of the Counterculture

**Burners**

A **Burner** is someone who has been to *Burning Man* and tends to identify with its progressive cultural ethos.

*Festival-based: techno-progressives*

1986-present

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**Discordians**

A **Discordian** is someone who subscribes to the chaos-worshipping parody religion of *Discordianism*.

*Media-based: culture jammers*

1963-present

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**Rainbows**

A **Rainbow** is someone who identifies as a member of the loose tribal organization called *The Rainbow Tribe of Living Light*.

*Lifestyle-based: contemporary hippies*

1970-present

These groups are informal, global, decades-old, and non-exclusive.
ORIGIN STORIES: FIGures, Threads and Manifestations

**Burners**
- Dadaism >
- Situationism >
- Start-Up Culture

- Guy Debord
- Hakim Bey
- Larry Harvey
- Burning Man

**Discordians**
- Anarchism >
- “Western Magick” >
- Beatnik Culture

- Robert Anton Wilson
- Alan Moore
- John Higgs
- Festival 23

**Rainbows**
- Environmentalism >
- New Age Religion >
- Indigenous Culture >
- Music Festival Culture

- Rachel Carson
- Timothy Leary
- Rainbow Gathering

Some commonalities: use of the arts; critiques of capitalism, religion, the state; social transgression.
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<td>'Burning Man for the 1%': the desert party for the tech elite</td>
<td>Inside the Resurgence of Discordianism – the Chaotic, LSD-Fuelled Anti-Religion</td>
<td>Thousands of people expected at Rainbow Gathering in eastern Oregon</td>
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<td>Burning Man brings a slice of the desert to White House doorstep</td>
<td>Embrace The Contradictions: The Strange Discordian World Of... The KLF</td>
<td>Chasing the Rainbow Family: Are They Hippies or Hobos?</td>
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<td>Burning Man sells out in minutes – and Twitter goes crazy</td>
<td>A review of Cosmic Trigger, a play based on Robert Anton Wilson’s autobiography</td>
<td>Don't Feed the Hippies!!! My first time attending the Rainbow Family National Gathering</td>
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<td>Burning Man: Search Activity</td>
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THE TEN PRINCIPLES OF BURNING MAN

1. Radical Inclusion
2. Gifting
3. Decommodification
4. Radical Self-reliance
5. Radical Self-expression
6. Communal Effort
7. Civic Responsibility
8. Leaving No Trace
9. Participation
10. Immediacy

A Temporary Autonomous Zone: 70,000 People, Loosely Structured, Ritualistic, Egalitarian.
“The Burning Man Community has become a ‘do-ocracy’ where the individual is empowered to directly participate in their surroundings to make the world the way that they want it to be, whether that world is our longtime home of Black Rock City, or the urban environment in which they live.”
DISCORDIANS ... WHAT ARE THEY ABOUT?

FIVE TENETS (AND SOME MORE)

1. HodgePodge: Eris (Chaos) and Aneris (Order)
2. Order and Disorder can be positive or negative
3. Modern society favors Order; Discordians favor positivity (wonderment)
4. Eating Hot Dog Buns is strictly prohibited
5. All phenomenon occur in Fives (23 is sacred)
6. Do not believe anything you read (including this)
7. It’s best to hold Discordian and non-Discordian ideas in your mind at the same time

Operation Mindf**k (OM): A decentralized campaign of civil disobedience, activism, art movements, especially performance art and guerrilla art, culture jamming, graffiti and other vandalism, practical jokes, hoaxes, reality hacking, chaos magic, words of power, and anything else that is believed to bring about social change through disrupting paradigms and thus forcing the victim to question the parameters of his or her reality tunnel. OM is the primary practice of discordianism.

A Chaotic, Decentralized Body of Thought and Practice Mixing Humor and Social Activism.

'We Discordians must all stick apart'.
"[C]ulture jammers […] introduce noise into the signal as it passes from transmitter to receiver, encouraging idiosyncratic, unintended interpretations. Intruding on the intruders, they invest ads, newscasts, and other media artifacts with subversive meanings; simultaneously, they decrypt them, rendering their seductions impotent. Jammers offer irrefutable evidence that the right has no copyright on war waged with incantations and simulations. And […] they refuse the role of passive shoppers, renewing the notion of a public discourse."
**UNOFFICIAL PRINCIPLES OF RAINBOW FAMILY**

1. Non-membership: no leaders
2. Consensus processes
3. Love and peace, non-violence
4. Creativity
5. New-Age Spirituality
6. Environmentalism
7. Non-consumerism
8. Non-commercialism
9. Alternative medicine
10. Multicultural diversity

*Rainbow Gathering is home, not Babylon.*

_A Loose Often Nomadic Tribe Dedicated to “Hippie” Values and Practices._
RAINBOWS ... WHAT HAVE THEY DONE FOR US?

Neo-Nomads

Global Tribalism

Cultural Appropriation

“It’s the most subversive kind of white supremacy.”

NOTICE OF COMPLAINT

Date: June 16, 2015

To: Rainbow Family and the Rainbow Gathering

cc: United States Forest Service
Office of Tribal Justice, United States Department of Justice

RE: Lakota Reject Rainbow Gathering in the Black Hills, Lakota Territory

The Teton Sioux Council and the Coteau Tribe, the traditional Strong Heart Warrior Society of the Two Nations, issues this communication and complaint to the Rainbow Family and Rainbow Gathering participants in the Teton Reservation of the Arikara, Arapahoe, Assiniboine, and the Black Hills.

Jessica Bruder
Nomadland
Surviving America in the Twenty-First Century

Somedewhere into the Rainbow
MICRODOSING AND PSYCHEDELICS:
- Silicon Valley’s Best-Kept Productivity Secret: Psychedelic Drugs
- Micro-dosing: The Drug Habit Your Boss Is Gonna Love

CREATIVE CHAOS AS INNOVATION:
- Enabling Creative Chaos: The Organization Behind the Burning Man Event
- Burning Man: Quality and Innovation in the Spirit of Deming

SKUNKWORKS, LABS, AUTONOMOUS ZONES:
- The Power of Play: What Burning Man Means for Innovation
- Consent Culture in Temporary Autonomous Zones

POST-SCARCITY COMMUNITIES:
- Does Burning Man Mean That a Post-Scarcity Society Would Be a Libertarian Utopia?

COLLECTIVELY, THESE COUNTERCULTURES STRUGGLE WITH AND CHALLENGE THE FRAMEWORKS OF CAPITALISM, SEXISM, RACISM, SOCIAL FRAGMENTATION, REPRESSION.
MODELS OF SELF-GOVERNANCE

BURNING MAN = TEMPORARY STRUCTURED ENVIRONMENT FOR INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM
  PROVIDES RESPITE FROM THE DOMINANT CULTURE WHILE TRYING TO TEMPER IT

DISCORDIANISM = CHAOTIC ACTIONS TO CHALLENGE OR CORRECT DOMINANT CULTURE
  DEDICATED TO CHALLENGING THE DOMINANT CULTURE BY MOCKING IT

RAINBOWS = PERSISTENT LEADERLESS TRIBAL/FAMILIAL CULTURAL STRUCTURE
  ATTEMPT TO ABANDON THE DOMINANT CULTURE BY DROPPING OUT

Anarchy = absence of government and absolute freedom of the individual, regarded as a political ideal
JOIN THE FUN

Burners

Discordians

Rainbows

BLACK ROCK CITY, NV
AUGUST 26 – SEPTEMBER 3
BURNINGMAN.ORG

6TH-8TH JULY 2018
YORKSHIRE, UK
FESTIVAL23.ORG.UK

Somewhere in the southern Appalachian Mountains,
July 1 to 7, 2018
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END