

Interview with Michael Bogue

Interviewer: Tim Miller

September 9, 1994

**Q:** We will try to get this down. Let me make sure of basics. You lived at Wheeler's and at The Farm and Brotherhood of Eternal Love?

**A:** Right.

**Q:** Is that the right ones?

**A:** Yeah, that's correct, not the right order, but that's the right three.

**Q:** Well, if it's okay with you, what I would like to do if possible is start with the Brotherhood of Eternal Love because we have talked to people from Wheeler's and The Farm, but not a single one from that group.

**A:** Okay, sure.

**Q:** Let me tell you what I know about it, which is virtually nothing, and you tell me if I'm wrong. Supposedly it had some connection with Timothy Leary, I think, that's what I had heard.

**A:** Yes, that's true, yeah.

**Q:** And it was in Los Angeles.

**A:** Right, area.

**Q:** Area, and that's about the beginning and end of my knowledge.

**A:** Okay.

**Q:** That's pretty thin.

**A:** Yeah. I'll tell you ... well, actually, a lot of people in it, myself included, didn't know all about it. Is the tape recorder on?

**Q:** Yeah, it's on.

**A:** Okay, great.

**Q:** Maybe, let's say out here at the front, this is Michael Bogue and it is September 9th, '97. Okay?

**A:** Okay. Just briefly, for the record, you could say that I was used to communal living because I was the oldest of nine. I grew up back in Massachusetts and I was pretty unsophisticated both politically and socially. I went into the Air Force and came out of the Air Force in 1966, worked for Continental Airlines briefly. I was an alcoholic through the time I went through the Air Force and for a time after the Air Force. The last vestiges of that were one time I called in sick, went on a company picnic, got drunk, had pangs of conscience, and called in and asked if they really needed me. They said to come back and come to work that night. I started driving back and the last thing I remembered was driving into this long, dark tunnel. What happened is I passed out in the tunnel, came out, drove over a 434-foot cliff and landed on a lion's cage with a live 475-pound male African lion in the cage.

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**Q:** In a zoo?

**A:** No, a guy had him for a pet in his backyard, and I just happened to land on it. Needless to say, that was a life-changing experience. I went to the hospital for a month or two behind that and had time to reevaluate my life. I had my first contact with Buddhism. At this time, as I said, I was working for the airline. My parents lived back in Massachusetts and I had gotten them a free pass for the airline from the airline, flown them to California and they liked it, went back, sold everything and moved with the rest of the kids. After I got in the accident I moved in with them at Orange Coast College in Costa Mesa. At Orange Coast College my younger sisters were going to college there and I was going to the j.c. too. This was very early '68. Things were happening. The hippies were full tilt and I was very curious. I got turned on to pot shortly after I went to school there, and I liked it. I found myself letting my hair grow and I grew my beard. My sister started dating this guy who was a real hippie. I had an attitude about the guy. I remember I thought something along the lines of "hippie-dippy" or like he wasn't intellectually satisfying to me. But I realized the guy had some juice. I met some friends of his and one of them sold me some acid. I carried it around for a couple of weeks or a month and I didn't take it. Then one day I was with this guy and I told him that I had bought the acid and he said, "Oh, you should take it." He encouraged me in a very positive manner to take the acid and also stayed with me as tripping partner. This was my sister's boyfriend. He was very very compassionate and very easy to be with at the time. My first experience was extremely joyful, pleasant, fun. We went our separate ways from that. He and my sister took off for Eastern Oregon where they were extras in a movie called Paint Your Wagon with Lee Marvin. I moved out of my family's house, dropped out of college, and went to Laguna Beach where there was a very very heavy psychedelic scene. I don't know quite how to express this, but something like frequently there's this scene that everybody knows about or the thing that everybody knows about, and then there's something that some people know about that is more of that. San Francisco had the reputation for being the big psychedelic center. The actual psychedelic center was Laguna Beach.

**Q:** Huh. Really.

**A:** As far as like consciousness raising is concerned I think San Francisco won out. But as far as like psychedelic drugs consumed and a for real effort at consciousness raising, Laguna Beach was definitely number one. There was really no comparison. I don't want to say this and sound full of myself. Laguna Beach was that kind of scene. Because it's such a disconnected experience, because it wasn't organized and all that, you have a lot of opinions here there and everywhere about how many psychedelics were done. And really, it's not actually indicative of much, but this guy that turned me on to acid also turned me on to ... he was one of the heaviest psychedelic people that I'm sure ever lived and just being a close friend of his, a best friend of his, I rank up there, too. What I didn't know about this guy was that the original Brotherhood of Eternal Love was a group of people down here, actually, in Orange County for the most part, that were trying to start a consciousness raising scene. They communicated with Timothy Leary when he was at Millbrook in New York about how to do it and would he send acid. He sent the acid and these people would meet at the head waters of a stream in East L.A. which at that time was still somewhat pristine. There was about a dozen people who would go up there and experience. My friend was one of those original dozen people that went up there.

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**Q:** Where was that, you say?

**A:** This was in East L.A.

**Q:** In East L.A., okay.

**A:** At the headwaters of a stream there. It was in a wooded area and they would go and experience.

**Q:** And this was early in psychedelia. Sounds like it must be '65 or '66 or '7.

**A:** Yeah, it was. It was right around that, yeah. These people would trip on very heavy psychedelics, good acid. And they were heavy trippers, too. They were really very strong trippers. Leary came out eventually to meet these people and he found out that they were heavier than him and they were further into it than him. And he was the name that surrounded the group, but these other people were really serious trippers. When I say they "experienced," I don't know if you know what I mean by that. You may, you may not. I probably took acid, I never counted, but my best guess is between a hundred and a hundred and fifty times. It could have been slightly less than a hundred, it could've been more than two hundred. But it was like that. And I would imagine that I tripped fifty to seventy-five times before I understood what the experience was.

**Q:** Huh.

**A:** And the experience has a real meaning. When Hendrix sang, "Have you ever really been experienced, well I have," that was not just a line. That was a real question. That was an underground sub-contextual question. When The Beatles went, "It is not dying, it is not dying," they were talking about the same thing. Because these people had enough money and influence and friends to get pure enough and strong enough acid to really do the trick. What really strong, really pure acid does is, it is not anything like, "Oh, he hallucinated," or ... it puts you in another dimension in reality, another dimension. To get to this dimension, you go through what is the closest thing you will experience to death this side of dying.

**Q:** Hmm.

**A:** It's been written about, it's not often talked about. People that have experienced it don't talk about it. I rarely hardly ever talk about it. I'm talking about it for this interview.

**Q:** Uh-huh.

**A:** And that is what bound this community of people together. They actually had some people that manufactured acid. Turned out to be up here in Northern California, near where I am now, that the people lived. They made Orange Sunshine acid. Had a name. What was unique about it or special about it was that it had the tiniest amount of DMT in it, which would push you past your resistances. What a freak out is in acid, when people get scared and freak out, and all these horror stories that you hear, is their ego trying a last ditch attempt to keep from dying, which is this dying experience that I'm talking about. Once you experience the dying experience, you go on to the other side of it, it is no longer a freak out. It is intense to the nth. You are completely and totally telepathic with every being anywhere in your vicinity and you understand how it all works. It's true enlightenment. It's true enlightenment. You experience true true enlightenment.

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**Q:** Hmm.

**A:** The problem with it is that it being drug induced, it'll last eight hours, but your own karma determines how much of it you can return to your daily life with. Do you understand?

**Q:** Mm-hmm.

**A:** Karma's a funny thing. It covers all kinds of bases. Your karma may be good enough to have this experience but bad enough to not be able to bring any significant amount of it back to your life. It's an experience that is more intense, I'm sure it's along lines with, but I have to say it's more intense than what the prophets experienced because of the delivery vehicle. It's so utterly complete. Anyway, what the Brotherhood did was, any time they found somebody that they thought would be helpful to their organization or had their head screwed on right or seemed like they were kind, loving, compassionate, decent people that would be good for the universe to know more than they knew, or they knew how to fly a plane, they would befriend them and if the friendship reached a certain point, they would dose them. And that's what happened with me. This guy tripped with me when I took my first acid trip there and then he took off with my sister and they went to film that movie in Eastern Oregon. I, in the meantime, had taken off with my girlfriend and gone to Mexico and eaten magic mushrooms down in [unintelligible] and had some interesting trips down there. Then I returned to Laguna Beach and I ran into this guy, my friend Bobby, we'll call him Bobby is his name. Bobby was with another woman and she was pregnant. He invited me over to his house. That day I had already taken some psychedelics that day. I went to his house and he gave me some sunshine. Then he had about an ounce of Afghani primo hash around and we started smoking that. And I was tripping very very heavily under the influence of probably five tabs of acid. And shared a good half an ounce or more of really excellent hashish. I had gotten to a place about as far as I'd ever been. Then my mind started going in this kind of vortex of -- it's kind of like an accelerating pitch kind of thing. At a certain point I realized that my mind wasn't coming back, and it scared me. It scared the shit out of me. I realized that I was dying. I thought that I'd overdosed. Didn't know at the time what was going on. I'd been right in the middle of it and not knowing that it was going on. I knew all kinds of people who were experiencing this. And they would talk about it but it would be sub-contextual. They'd talk about the experience and I'd think, oh, experience. It's simply impossible to understand this verbally. I only have it as a memory. I can't put myself back into that place. I look at the guy that I'm with and I reach over and I touch his knee. And he looks at me and he knows what's going on. He starts chanting Om. And I resisted that, I thought that was hippie-dippy flaky, you know. But I was very scared. And he said, "Come on, do it." So I did it. I started chanting. But you know, I'll tell you a little bit about the audio-visual which is relevant but does not really convey what I'm trying to say. What happened was I saw myself in all my previous incarnations. I saw myself as a Chinaman, a Mongol, a Viking, just instantaneously like a slow movie reel, all these faces that I recognized as myself, coming up to where I was looking at my friend's face and I saw myself, I saw my own face there. I understood and realized that we're all one in the truest sense. We are all really one. And then this, almost felt like a hand took the back of my head, took the top of my head and pulled it back and I mouthed, "I believe." At that point I went through this death experience, this like ego-loss death experience and then when I blinked, opened my eyes again, everything was different. Everything had changed. The universe had changed around me. It says in the Bible, this one place, "You should see them as through the eyes of a babe." Well, that's what happened. I saw everything as if --

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preconditioning. You know, like there's people that say your brain is like a funnel and that it limits the amount of information that you take in because you'd be overwhelmed and it would be impossible to make relevant decisions if all that was happening around you were allowed to come in all at once. So when you talk about blowing your mind, it kind of blows the funnel and it all comes in at once and that was what was happening, it all came in at once. And I saw and felt and tasted and experienced everything. Then we continued chanting and, this is cursory, understand, this went on over eight hours or thereabouts. In the course of chanting, the entire universe disappeared. My friend's face took on the face of the divine and all he was was a face in space with like a necklace that had a planet dangling from it. And that was all that there was. There wasn't even me.

**Q:** Hmm.

**A:** And I went from a relatively unsophisticated, not very hip, pseudo-liberal person who'd actually taken acid quite a few times and thought he was pretty hip to somebody who knew a whole lot more that night. And I have to say that was the pivotal experience of my life.

**Q:** Hmm.

**A:** And there's really quite a few people that did that. Not many talk about it because unless you have a situation like the one that we're in now, it's hard to get past everybody's trip about it. Anyway.

**Q:** Yeah, that's for sure.

**A:** Yeah. That's how I became a member of the Brotherhood of Eternal Love. That's how you become a member of the Brotherhood of Eternal Love.

**Q:** By having that experience of death?

**A:** The experience, yeah. That was the initiation to the Brotherhood of Eternal Love. That's why you haven't heard that much about it or know that much about it. It existed in a group of people. It was also an organized psychedelic smuggling trip. What would happen was there were guys that went to Afghanistan, they befriended and, I'm sure, initiated these brothers that made excellent hash in Afghanistan, Afghani primo, really excellent, excellent hash. And they contracted to buy it all. At that time it was relatively easy to get drugs into Germany, very porous borders. They would get the hash into Germany where they would buy a Volkswagen van, take out the side panels and fill them up with around two hundred pounds of hash. Then they would ship that to New York and then they would drive it to Laguna Beach and then there would be a big party. The general idea was pretty spacy, pretty flower child, but we had so much horse power on our side that we really thought we could pull it off. We would initiate a lot of key people. By the way, this initiation process, I know sometimes some people did it without knowledge, but in general, by far the most part, it was done with knowledge that you were going to trip. The people knew they were going to trip, they just didn't know what was going to happen. They didn't understand the experience. They weren't getting dosed, like they didn't know they were taking acid.

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**Q:** Uh-huh.

**A:** People knew that they were taking acid, they just didn't know what acid really did. They didn't really know what it was for. There were several groups of people. There were smaller groups of people. Larry and some other folks lived up in Idlewild, which is up in the mountains on the other side of the peak from Palm Springs. Then there were a lot of people, the dealers mostly, that lived in Laguna Canyon. There were a bunch of cottages in this canyon that all the hippies had taken over and ran their business through. It was a wide open, wild west, notorious, crazy psychedelic scene, the likes of which have never been seen anywhere before and I'm sure never will again, I mean, it was a unique time warp. It was like a time warp, it really was.

**Q:** Uh-huh.

**A:** My friend and I lived in this little village that was thirty miles or thereabouts, twenty-five miles, maybe, back inland on top of a mountain, the first set of mountains that you go over heading east, in a little village called El Cariso [??] village which had about forty homes and twenty of them were people who were involved with the Brotherhood. I remember one day this guy came by, said he was a member of the Brotherhood, he could've been because he was frantic and obviously had run into something very heavy, heavier than he knew how to deal with. He said he was a pilot and all that stuff, but he was acting like he was kind of a big shot, and my friend asked him if he would like to take some acid with us and he said yes and he did and it happened again. The guy left and a couple of days later we were all standing around in this health food store that we had as a kind of focal point for the community. It needed a new floor, we were wondering how we were going to pay for the floor, and a small plane flew overhead, circled several times, and then the door on the plane opened, a package dropped out, and it was a kilo of pot.

**Q:** Wow.

**A:** And this guy was repaying the favor, and we sold pot and put in a new floor in the grocery store.

**Q:** Great. What a story.

**A:** So anyway, we were very very telepathic as a community. We delved way far into people's psyches, without a road map. We were winging it, but we were an amazingly telepathic community. We spent a year, year and a half doing this, and then one day at the house we were living in, very early in the morning my friend Bobby went out the front door to stretch and greet the sun and he looks over and he sees this guy in a baseball cap, plaid shirt, checked Bermuda shorts and binoculars looking at him. He looks at the guy and the guy looks up at the trees like he's birding. Bobby comes back in the house and says, "Pack, we're moving." And I say, "What's going on?" At first we thought he was paranoid, and he says, "Nope, nope, this is really going on." So that night we took off with all our belongings and drove out. Called everybody else up in the community and told them what we saw and what we thought was going on. Only one other person took off, everybody else went down. We headed up north, we didn't know what the hell we were going to do. We got to San Francisco and we called back. We found out that we both had John Doe warrants out on us.

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**Q:** So the bust had already occurred.

**A:** Yeah, it had already occurred, but we had told everybody. We'd done our best. They thought we were paranoid.

**Q:** Uh-huh, yeah.

**A:** So anyway, I have to jump around in time a little bit here, but this is a very very interesting, amazingly telepathic thing that happened. Subsequent to this, if you want to hear about it I'll tell you the story about how I went to The Farm.

**Q:** Okay.

**A:** I was at The Farm, I'd been there for some years and this guy came in. He'd been tripping hard with his old lady. I guess he'd been abusive towards her. I don't know if he'd hit her or if he'd ... I think he was just verbally abusive. On The Farm we did this kind of thing and that guy came to stay with me. I was talking with him and I was coming on to him about how he was treating his old lady. And he was talking to me in a parallel sense, in a parallel way, trying to forge a different kind of connection with me. Actually, it's kind of like an ego agreement he wanted to forge with me, for me to say it's okay because we're men, to be that way towards a woman. And I wasn't buying it. We were working it out and I was coming on to him, telling him what I thought he was doing. Then at one point it's like he took a breath and he said, okay, I'm going to get to the real nitty gritty here of the vibe. He looks at me and he says, "Look man, I know you were in the Brotherhood. I know you were in the Brotherhood of Eternal Love. Why don't you stop talking to me that way and telling me this stuff. I know you were in the Brotherhood." He didn't know me by recognizing me, he admitted that. And I had never met this cat before that day.

**Q:** He just knew you from what was going on between you right then, you mean?

**A:** Yeah. He knew. He just knew.

**Q:** Wow. That's pretty amazing.

**A:** Mm-hmm. I thought so. That was really amazingly telepathic.

**Q:** Yeah.

**A:** Yeah. That really happened. Are you interested in hearing my other commune stories?

**Q:** Yeah. Yeah, sure. Is there any more to say about the Brotherhood? What happened to the Brotherhood?

**A:** Okay, the Brotherhood was a pretty wild trip. The folks that were involved with the Brotherhood were pretty way out people, every one of us. I'm the only person that I know of that went through these particular changes and these particular trips, and I would know. The progression of my spiritual trip. One guy died on a motorcycle, some guys got popped for big big drug busts, big ones. Enormous ones. Gargantuan ones. Some guys got killed smuggling. There's two or three people that are still alive and still making a living, and of all the people that were ever involved with the Brotherhood, I'm the only one that I know that quit dealing.

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**Q:** Huh.

**A:** Yeah, that's it.

**Q:** Okay.

**A:** I know where some of them are and what some of them are doing. This close friend of mine, really a very interesting, amazingly powerful, very paradoxical person, if you were to meet him, you would probably have the negative attitude to dismiss him as poor white trash that didn't know what he was doing. It's easy to do that without understanding how incredibly powerful the guy is on the astral, on the mental level, on the mind plane. Because he's fat and he's sloppy and he is affected, acts affected. But when the chips are down, he is extraordinarily powerful on the astral plane. Anybody that's around him very long finds that out. I'm still in touch with him. He's a good friend of mine but he's dealing and I'm not, so we don't see or talk to each other that much anymore. But I make it a point to see him every year or two.

**Q:** It's amazing if you can do that for thirty years and not be busted.

**A:** Oh, he's gone down a couple of times.

**Q:** Oh, okay.

**A:** He and I and his now ex-wife headed north. We put everything in the station wagon and headed to San Francisco. We got to this place called Father's. This guy called himself Father. I think he was Indian. He had some followers that turned out to be pretty decent people. Steven from The Farm once said about this guy that he was the only guy he ever knew that he saw walk past two sleeping dogs and the dogs got up and get into a fight with each other. Some of this guy's teachings were to burn the government for welfare and food stamps because it's the government's duty to float such a groovy trip as he had. This guy had this commune in San Francisco and we wound up at his place for one night. He told us about Wheeler's Ranch. I had already known some people from Southern California that had gone through Wheeler's and told me about it and said it was groovy so I cross-referenced it. We decided that's where we were going to go. We had to lie low for a while anyway. So we drove up to Wheeler's Ranch. We drove into the ranch. We set our tent up. It was dark by the time we got there. We set our tent up on the ranch. We got it laid out and staked down but we didn't get the poles up, but we decided to just sleep in our sleeping bags under it like that for the night. It was a perfectly clear night. A couple hours after we go to sleep, an amazing thunderstorm, and it's just pouring, torrents. So we get up and we go and this was our initiation to Wheeler's -- we stumbled through the woods until we found a tent and spent the night in his tent, dried everything out the next day and set up a place to live. The next day this dealer came from San Francisco. He drove in and this guy was frantic out of his mind. I don't know if he was on speed or if he was just paranoid out of his mind or what. He came with his wife or girlfriend and one or two other people. He drives down onto the ranch too fast, skids to a halt in his jeep-like vehicle, jumps out of the vehicle and starts yelling at the people there to grab the stuff and they're going to go down to their cabin. We see that the girl, I forgot, it was so long ago I forgot whether she was pregnant, had a baby or was just frail, but you know, they needed help. So we offered to help them. I said, "Hey, I'll help you carry the stuff down." I said, "Do you want help carrying it down?" And he didn't even look at me. This guy was just out of his mind. And he says, "Yeah. Thanks." So he grabs an armful of



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stuff kind of randomly and just goes charging over the west bank of this sheep ridge. He charges over the west bank. Bobby and I grab some stuff and we go after him and he goes lurching down the side of this hill, just running straight down the side of the hill. After a little bit of this it became apparent that he didn't know where he was going and he was just freaking out so we decided to let him freak freely and we yelled after him, "Hey, we're leaving your stuff on the pathway here, it's right here on the path. It's a well-worn path, the stuff is here." So we left his stuff there and turned around, started going back up the path. On the way back up, passed this little cabin which I came to know as the chapel. There were some people in it. We walked past and we smiled and they smiled and they seemed friendly and they were smoking a joint so we went back and we smoked a joint. We ... That was on me, I said, "I gotta get eight tabs." And he said, "Take eight." So I thought, I'm gonna sit and watch this guy.

**Q:** He was just gonna take them all right there?

**A:** Yeah, he did. He took them all.

**Q:** Okay.

**A:** He took eight tabs. And he tripped pretty good, we had a good time together. Coyote impressed me when I first met him by doing that. This is the first I'd met a Coyote. In the overall scheme of things, Coyote was ... he was an acid tester, but he was never into anything like what we were doing. We actually took him down there one time and it absolutely blew his mind. Absolutely blew his mind. He had never experienced anything like it. The day he got down there ...

**Q:** Down in L.A.?

**A:** Yeah, down at Laguna Beach, we took him to Laguna Beach. This is probably in his story, where we took him down there and the day that we brought him there they were demolishing a house in Laguna Canyon. They were taking this old car and revving it up and driving it up a ramp through the house. He was amazed by that. We eventually took him up to Idlewild where Larry's Trip [??] was?

**Q:** Yeah?

**A:** We were up there for a day or two tripping, I forgot exactly what we were doing, but then we had to go back. We all piled into the station wagon and we had this gallon apple juice jar. It was filled with water, we'd already drank the organic apple juice in it. It was filled with water and we put in a gram of Sunshine Acid, powdered Sunshine Acid.

**Q:** A gram?

**A:** A gram, yeah.

**Q:** Wow.

**A:** Because of the orange color it looked like apple juice with sediment. We'd shake it up and we were drinking it as we went along. We picked up this hitchhiker. I was driving, I've always been the driver through these scenes. We picked up this hitchhiker. He gets in the car and the vibes are just like ... he gets in and he says, "Hey, you guys going as far as -- hah!" And his eyes get wide, he's in a car with these six maniacs who are [unintelligible] their brains out. We go down this mountain quite a long ways. The

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guy was so paranoid I thought about stopping and letting him out, but being a hippie I was going to give him a ride. We get down to the bottom of the hill and come into this small town which is kind of a redneck town. There's a stop sign there and two lanes going in one direction up to the stop sign and a police car at the stop sign. We pull up next to the stop sign. This guy that I'd picked up hitchhiking is sitting shotgun, opens the door unexpectedly and says, "Well, thanks for the ride," real loud, slams the door, walks off. I'm looking to my right to where he was and a cop who was driving looks at me, and the chase is on. The cop drives straight through the stop sign, goes up, takes a right and pulls behind a billboard, just like you see in the comics. I go kitty-corner across the street to a gas station, pop my hood, check the oil, pop the hood down, take off in a different direction. I'm looking for a way to turn and get through town and the lights are on behind me. He pulls us over. I'm the only one with any ID, so he puts everybody up against the car and he goes around, asks everybody their name and Coyote says, what did he say, some Hawaiian name. Charley -- I don't know, it just rolled right off his tongue. Everybody gave him a false name and I had an ID. The cop reaches into the back seat of the car and pulls out the apple juice bottle with a gram of Sunshine in it. He says, "What's this?" Coyote says, "It's apple juice, have some." So the cop takes the top off the apple juice and he takes a swig, he yells, "Uh, I don't know how you guys can drink this stuff." He puts the cap back on and puts it in the car.

**Q:** What a scene! That's great.

**A:** It was a scene, I tell ya, it was a scene. I had some warrants out on old parking tickets. I used to hitchhike a lot and they'd give me tickets for it and they'd only collect them a little bit at a time so they could keep popping me in the hopes of finding something on me. They got me for some warrant and they took me away and they made everybody else promise not to drive the car, because no one else had a license. They said, sure thing. They took me away, and I was tripping, they took me away and I spent eight days in jail. They forgot about me for a day. I was only supposed to do seven days. In the meantime, everybody else took off down to Timothy Leary's trial, he'd been busted in Laguna Canyon for acid. On the way down they get stuck in a traffic jam and Coyote puts down the back tailgate of the car and pees [??] out on the freeway. Then they get to the trial. They're sitting in there and they're blazing, I tell you, they are really blazing. My friend Bobby hears the hypocrisy of what's going on. He jumps up and -- I cannot repeat what he said, I can't even exactly remember what he said, but he disrupts the trial and gets thrown out of there. Then they go back up to Wheeler's Ranch. When I get out of jail I go up to Wheeler's Ranch. Anyway, those were just some interesting experiences that happened to me along the way. Wheeler's Ranch was based on no one could be asked to leave. There was no violence. Violence was the only thing that you could be asked to leave for but they didn't include things like tobacco or wine or like that. Pretty soon it became known as a party place and a lot of winos moved up and a lot of hard vibes [??] moved up. There were people there that were trying to accomplish something spiritually but it got overwhelmed by pretty alcoholic vibes. It was a very free place, free love, free trips, all that kind of stuff. There were psychedelics down there too. It was a back to the country scene. It was quite engaging in a lot of ways, but there was no growth there. I actually spent longer there than I needed to. I got a case of infectious hepatitis when I was there.

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**Q:** You're not the only one. There were a bunch of those up there.

**A:** Yeah, that's right. Actually there was an epidemic for a little while. While I was laid up I read Monday Night Class. I had already been to one Monday night class and then I read the book and I thought this guy was really high. There was a group of people that used to go to Monday night class from Wheeler's and I started going with them. Then one day the caravan took off and went around the country. When it came back one of the guys from the caravan came onto the farm and I immediately got telepathic with this guy and we became fast friends. We still are friends. He lives around here. He invited me down to meet the people in his bus. I went to the city. I knew some people in the city and I arranged for a lot of the people on the caravan to come spend some time at this house and to have a potluck at this house. I got to know a lot of people on the caravan. We were setting it up. It was happening this morning and myself and some of the people from the house were out shopping. We got the food and a lot of people had showed up at the house in the interim while we were out shopping. I went up the steps and into the house and experienced this really incredible change of consciousness. It was like walking through a door kind of change of consciousness like I'd just taken acid, only I hadn't just taken acid. I thought, "Whoa, what is going on here? This is very interesting." It was the vibes of these people which I thought was pretty far out because they managed to do it at a really significant level without acid. I noticed that things were pretty high. These people that were on the bus with this guy that I met, I hung out with them for a day or two. They invited me to stay on their bus and I accepted. At that point I said my farewells to Wheeler's Ranch and the folks that I knew there, Coyote among them, and took off on the second caravan.

**Q:** Yeah, really, huh. And went to The Farm.

**A:** Yeah, I went to The Farm. I was the only person who had ever done any mechanical work on the bus.

**Q:** Yeah? So kept you busy on the trip, I suppose?

**A:** Have you talked to a lot of people who have been on The Farm?

**Q:** Yeah, yeah. Dozens.

**A:** Yeah, The Farm was really a very very intense intense trip. It really was intense. It was very very high, but I'd say like the Brotherhood was high because of the propulsion system but it didn't have that much in the way of content. The Farm was high because of the content. It used much less of a propulsion system. We didn't do acid on The Farm.

**Q:** Well, after Steven and those guys were busted, it was pretty dry even for grass and stuff, I think, for a while.

**A:** Oh yeah, we didn't even smoke grass for six months or more. Anyway, I traveled with the caravan. It was all into sorting out the vibes. All the time we were sorting out the vibes. It was really true that things would break down when the vibes weren't right. We had this person on board the bus who was a pretty heavy tripper. She just couldn't resist ripping everybody off. The bus broke down on a mountain path in Utah. It wasn't until we got straight with her that the bus got fixed. That happened twice on the caravan, actually, where it was like absolutely connected to the vibes like that. The bus wouldn't run until we got the vibes straight. Then as soon as we got the vibes straight, we just drove away.

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**Q:** Hah, that's pretty amazing.

**A:** It was pretty amazing. A pretty intense time for the whole thing was on the caravan because we were all living in these very confined spaces with a lot of people. I think there were as many as twenty people on the bus I was on one time. We all slept on it. There were as many as a hundred vehicles in the caravan. So I went to The Farm. I was there when we were at the lakes and the parks around Nashville. We were on the first farm that we rented for a dollar a year from this conceptual Marxist that owned a factory in Nashville. I was there when we bought the second farm and built it up and I was actually one of the responsible people for starting the Colorado farm and introducing ...

**Q:** Where was the Colorado farm?

**A:** It was in Ward, Colorado, twenty-two ...

**Q:** Ward, yeah, I know where Ward is.

**A:** You know where Ward is?

**Q:** Yeah, uh-huh.

**A:** Yeah, with a friend of mine who lived on The Farm. I came there and I was really gung ho on doing the farm thing hard and heavy. Shooting from the hip. I got a bunch of people interested in what we were doing. A lot of them became more integrated into the fabric of The Farm than I was. But there was a boy's camp that was built a hundred years ago at that time a hundred years ago at Brainard Lake at the top of this mountain peak that I guess was a volcano and there was a lake on the very top. It was accessible for about three months of the year. There were log homes up there, hundred year old straight as they get logs. For a nominal fee they would sell those logs to anyone who wanted to tear them down and use them elsewhere. So my friends, there were several of them, one guy ramrodded it and then the rest of them went up there and lived for a year up at the top were these howling winds, perpetual. They took the logs down, lived in one of the cabins. They had to tunnel their way to the outhouse through the snow.

**Q:** Wow. Jeez.

**A:** They used to sit on these silver saucers on the lake and take sheets and hold the corners and it would whip them across the lake at forty, fifty miles an hour.

**Q:** Jeez, amazing.

**A:** And then they'd collapse the sheets by letting go of the corners, but there's no way to stop. They'd crash into a snow bank on the far side.

**Q:** Wow.

**A:** So anyway, he brought these logs down about a thousand foot to Ward. He had some land at the top of Ward. Just as the road through Ward met the peak to peak highway there was a cutback there, a switchback that went to his property. He built a couple of log cabins there and a dome. I met them and I lived with them for a while there. Then we all went back to The Farm in Tennessee.

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**Q:** Wow, so that was the Colorado Farm?

**A:** That was the Colorado Farm, and I lived on the Wisconsin Farm which somebody else started. There are actually quite a few satellite Farms.

**Q:** Yeah, the Wisconsin one, I think, was fairly big one.

**A:** Yeah it was.

**Q:** We interviewed a guy in Eugene named Craig Blaker [??] who was pretty active at Wisconsin.

**A:** I think he came after me, but I think I knew him, there was little bit of a crossover but I didn't know him well.

**Q:** Oh, yeah, you know he died recently?

**A:** No, I didn't know that.

**Q:** Yeah.

**A:** How did he die?

**Q:** Cancer.

**A:** Oh, hmm. Yeah, several of my friends have died from that from The Farm.

**Q:** Huh.

**A:** I just recently found that I have ADD, which explains a lot of my history.

**Q:** Yeah?

**A:** I was very unsettled on The Farm. Although I spent seven years there, I feel like I spent too long. But Steven, of anybody I've ever known, gave it an honest try to be the Buddha. I've checked them all out. I really looked at every Swami that came down the pike and I know about all of those trips, and I think Steven's was the most honest one that happened. The intensity of it was not to be believed. I consider myself really, in a way, although in some ways I'm not as successful as I would like to be, karma's a funny thing, you know? My personal karma put me into what I really truly believe to be the most intense LSD scene that existed and then The Farm which was ... I'm sure -- I don't know, how did the other people try and talk about The Farm? Let me tell you something, right off. I saw this happen twice, without drugs, not even pot. Nothing. I saw one time with Steven, another time it was another guy, was talking to another person about something very relevant and very personal and very intense. You know those plasma balls where you put your hand on the ball and lightning arcs to your hand?

**Q:** Oh, yeah. Uh-huh.

**A:** I saw, clear as day, for a sustained period of time, that kind of lightning pass from one person's face to another in these conversations. I saw it happen not once, but twice. One time it was blue and one time it was white. During times when there was intense delving into subconscious, which is what we did, I've seen backgrounds disappear, pyramids appear, pharaohs' faces, the Sphinx appear floating in the background behind people. I mean, drugless.

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**Q:** Uh-huh.

**A:** The Farm was really really intense. But I'll tell you something. Steven said early on that if you're just a little bit off in the beginning of something, it's like if you put a triangle down on a piece of paper or at an angle you get a straight line, right? When the angle comes off that line, where they diverge is very close, but the further out you go, the wider it gets. And he said we have to be right on. I think that that's exactly what happened.

**Q:** It was just slightly off of right on?

**A:** Uh-huh. Now what I think of The Farm is that it has lost its influence. It's become rather an inbred community.

**Q:** Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Yeah it has, it really has.

**A:** And the people are very protective of their space and their lifestyle and there are periodic flashes of where they try and reach out and regain the energy that they had but they get shut down pretty easily because it's a big world and things have moved on. I mean, The Truth is eternal, Truth is eternal, however, conditions in the here and now are always changing.

**Q:** Mm-hmm, that's right. Yeah. The set and setting, so to speak, are pretty different.

**A:** Yeah. And it's lost a lot of its relevance.

**Q:** Yeah, Steven has, in my opinion, kind of lost, or maybe not lost, but it's not as prominent, that whatever you call it -- genius, "Buddhahood," whatever. He's more just of a regular guy now. He's still respected, but the magic isn't there somehow.

**A:** Yeah, I agree. However, if you were to sit down and really trip with him, you would find it would still yet be quite an experience, let me guarantee you.

**Q:** Yeah, yeah, no, I don't doubt it, he's still amazing and he's still ...

**A:** Have you met him?

**Q:** Yeah, mm-hmm. And he's still living his ideals as perfectly and fully as he can.

**A:** Yeah, I agree. My wife is a Buddhist now and I'm really really conflicted about this one. I'm not practicing although I have practiced. It's one that I always had problems with. I always felt like it was kind of flaky, but I feel like from what I know of historical perspective, theoreticalist perspective is correct. The actual practice of it I have a problem with. It's Nahmyl Harangakyl [??] Buddhism.

**Q:** Oh yeah, uh-huh, Sokagakay [??]?

**A:** Yeah. And being ADD, I found out that there are certain noises that bother me. I'm really irritated by certain kinds of noises, and other kinds of noises I need. Frequently I need to have a television on in the background. Not paying attention to, just kind of white noise. It kind of soothes me for some stuff. But chanting drives me up the wall.

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**Q:** Huh, really. Well ...

**A:** And my wife does it. And I did it. Anyway -- theoretically, Steven's trip, this particular Buddhism is focused on the Lotus Sutra [??], which is by the Buddha's own word, the ultimate teaching, he said it in the Lotus Sutra, which is essentially the last Sutra that he ever spoke. If you read the Lotus Sutra it claims that everything else that proceeded it was to lead to this point here, and this was the ocean that all the rivers ran into. Taking the Buddha at his word, they follow. That could be a point of divergence right there, is what I'm getting to. Steven has some kind of Hinayana teachings there. He thought he was Mahayana, but some of his teachings are Hinayana. Be that as it may, he thought he was the Buddha and according to ... there's fifty-two levels of Bodhisapa, did you know that?

**Q:** No. Fifty-two? No, I didn't.

**A:** There's fifty-two levels of Bodhisapa, including somewhere past the middle, I believe on towards the end is the point of no return. In other words, if you reach that level of Bodhisapa, you don't ever turn back, you progress. Prior to this [??] Steven said that he reached the level where you would never regress. Actually, I don't know if he has or has not, but I believe that Steven was one of those levels of Bodhisapa. Steven was very heavy, he thought he was the ultimate gem cutter. He thought that he was the Buddha. I know he thought that because I was there when he said it. There was one relatively small meeting where he proclaimed that he was Buddha. I'm sure it's on tape. It cannot be denied.

**Q:** It's interesting in light of the problems that The Farm had in the Eighties and all those [??], Steven got criticized plenty on the grounds of economic mismanagement and stuff like that which is probably at least partly true ...

**A:** Very true.

**Q:** But I have yet to find, and we've talked to a lot of people from The Farm, and I'm yet to find anyone who sees anything that I would call bad faith or charlatanism or anything that is bad in a moral sense. It's bad maybe on a material plane, as he would say, in some ways.

**A:** He was too conservative.

**Q:** Yeah?

**A:** He was too conservative, which made him -- he was a bit hard-assed [??]. But I tell you, there's never been anybody that tripped like that guy. He was in a league of his own. I tell ya, what he did and what he was was unreal. And if what he was wasn't the Buddha, then, gosh, I'd really like to meet a Buddha.

**Q:** Yeah, really.

**A:** Because, I tell you, no shit, Tim, you walk into a house that he was in, your consciousness changed big time. You started dumping any kind of malicious thoughts in you head overboard, it's like bailing out your life raft when you came into his presence. You knew you had no secrets. You knew you had no secrets. I have seen people walk into his place and run out.

**Q:** Really?

**A:** There was guy that had a Bible and was going to try to convert him to Christianity ...

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**Q:** Oh, yeah, is that right?

**A:** He walks into Steven's bus [??], Steven was very gracious, you know, and all that, but the consciousness was just so high, so incredibly high that the guy came in and he just snapped. He turned around and ran. I used to work off The Farm, I was one of the original construction crews that brought money into The Farm. I'd leave The Farm everyday and I'd come back every day. You couldn't always tell when you were in it, in the [unintelligible], you know? But I'd leave and I'd come back and you get at about the gate and you would go through a qualitative change of consciousness coming back to The Farm everyday. And this was after only having been gone ten hours or twelve hours and coming back the same day. Anyway, I spent seven years on The Farm. I was really way overdue for leaving. I got sick and laid up for a couple of months with this particular flu that was going around, relapsed a couple of times. I flirted with somebody that I shouldn't have flirted with and I got in trouble over it and I left The Farm. It was no big deal but it got me chewed out real good and I just didn't want to do it anymore.

**Q:** Yeah, time to go. Are you in touch with ex-Farm people?

**A:** Oh yeah, all kinds of them. They're my best friends.

**Q:** California's crawling with them.

**A:** Yeah, there's a lot of them in this particular town and this area has a lot, too. [unintelligible] there's probably eight or nine other families that live within ten miles of me.

**Q:** There are a whole bunch up around Nevada City.

**A:** Yeah, I know them, too. Sylvia.

**Q:** Yeah, you know Sylvia? I went and stayed with her for a couple of days once.

**A:** You did, huh? Yeah, she's a good person.

**Q:** Yeah, I like her a lot.

**A:** She's really a sweetheart.

**Q:** Well, pretty amazing.

**A:** I hope you can get something out of that.

**Q:** Yeah, that's great. I have a business matter here I need to tend to. We need to get firm, what would you say, authorization, meaning what we're trying to do is take all these transcripts and transcribe them insofar as we can get students to do typing, and the question is, is it okay with you if we then put it on file and kind of let it be open to the public?

**A:** Yeah, it is alright.

**Q:** Can people read it and quote from it and everything?

**A:** Sure.



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**Q:** Okay, just possibly a little bit dicey, I think, with some of the Brotherhood activities.

**A:** It's history, it's my history, I'm not ashamed of it at all.

**Q:** Okay.

**A:** I am definitely not ashamed of it. Actually, it was some of the best times of my life.

**Q:** Yeah, well boy, it's really intriguing to hear about it. Could you put dates on that at all? You said they were founded in the mid-Sixties, you think, basically?

**A:** Yeah, they were probably '66-ish, '65 or '66 for the beginning. I can't even remember the names of the big players. I was not like the inner circle, but I knew them. Actually, me and my friend Bobby, who also has ADD, it's the way we operate. We were always moving around a lot and not feeling comfortable being inside the main part of the machine. It was around '65, '66 that it started, it was '67 that it really started moving, '68 I was introduced. I don't know when it faded because we left.

**Q:** Well, it sounds like it kind of teetered out with busts and some killings?

**A:** Yeah, that happened over a long period of time. There was actually, up by Sylvia's place in Nevada City there were some busts with people who were formally ... a couple of years back, large ones. Made all kinds of newspapers and all that. People that were involved with this scene. There is actually still a few people down there still connected with it, but most everybody's scattered or dead or in jail.

**Q:** Some still in jail, huh?

**A:** Yeah, there are some in jail.

**Q:** That's too bad.

**A:** Mm-hmm, it is. I would like to have access to this. I would like to read other people's stuff, my own stuff -- if you ever write a book about this, let me know?

**Q:** Well, as a matter-of-fact, I'm working on one, as you can imagine.

**A:** Yeah, I can imagine.

**Q:** Yeah, sure. Okay, well I'm planning to let everyone know what goes on. It's a ways down the road before it'll be done, but I've heard some of the most amazing stories you could ever imagine.

**A:** I'll bet, I'll bet. How's mine?

**Q:** Well, it's great. It's absolutely amazing. It fills in this hole, I just heard of these people but didn't know any of this detail. I'd heard someone say that they were associated with Leary and that they'd done some dealing, but you've raised it to a much clearer level for me.

**A:** Yeah, that's essentially what happened with them. They were very active in Southern California, they were very active in the organic food business, and they were very active in Hawaii, too. Actually there are still some people over in Hawaii who were involved with that.

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**Q:** Do you have any sense of how big it was at its peak? How many people were involved?

**A:** Probably at its peak a few hundred. But remember, these few hundred people didn't all know each other. The initiation thing you may only be connected to one or two or three people, you know? It was very loose that way. But you recognized each other, people that went through this experience knew.

**Q:** This makes me think, I don't know how far you're interested in pursuing this, but it's been about a year ago I talked to a hog farmer who still lives up at, you know the hog farm has that farm up in Leightonville [??]?

**A:** Leightonville, yeah.

**Q:** She lives up there and she's going back to school and collecting Sixties' psychedelic stories. Makes me wonder if she's talked to Brotherhood people, because ...

**A:** I would talk to her.

**Q:** Yeah?

**A:** Sure.

**Q:** Well, I will communicate with her at some point in the next few months, I'm sure, so I might let her know you're there.

**A:** Okay, you could do that. I really believe that at points of my life I was involved with people who took more psychedelics than anybody else who ever lived.

**Q:** Boy, it sounds like it, yeah.

**A:** I mean, serious serious amounts.

**Q:** Yeah, this is clearly beyond anything I've done.

**A:** You know those electrical spools? I've been at a table made of an electrical spool that had the bowl within that hole in the center there?

**Q:** Yeah, right.

**A:** And there was a full pound of Afghani primo in it.

**Q:** Jeez.

**A:** And there were six or eight hoses with valves like chemistry valves that came off. You sat around the edge and we smoked an entire pound of it.

**Q:** Amazing. Wow. That's serious.

**A:** Yeah. I feel like this needs to be spoken. I don't want it to sound like that I think this was a greater vehicle for enlightenment because there was so much more of it done because these guys turned out to not be the heaviest people I ever knew. The people that lived on The Farm were the heaviest people I ever knew. But this was the heaviest psychedelic scene that ever existed, just as point of fact. I think that should come out somewhere.

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**Q:** Yeah. Yeah, really. Well, I really appreciate your informing me. This is quite sort of amazing stuff, really. I really appreciate it.

**A:** That's alright. I'm glad to. I've really been needing to express this for some time. I've been needing to tell this story.

**Q:** Well, that's amazing. If I get up there sometime, you want to go have coffee or something?

**A:** I'd love to, Tim. I'd love to meet ya.

**Q:** Yeah, I'd like to do it. I get out there in the vicinity, with luck, once a year maybe.

**A:** Well, let me know.

**Q:** In fact, I was supposed to interview an ex-Farm guy in Sebastopol [??], a guy named John Coate [??].

**A:** Oh yeah, John Coate's an old friend of mine, yeah.

**Q:** But things just messed up and we didn't connect. I've talked to him on the phone and stuff, but ...

**A:** Yeah, he's an interesting cat.

**Q:** Yeah, he's younger, I think.

**A:** Not a bunch, but he is younger.

**Q:** He came in like high school or something like that, I think.

**A:** Yeah, he might be. I'm fifty-three, he's probably forty-five, forty-six, forty-seven, somewhere around there.

**Q:** But he was a little bit young in terms of the original Farm founders and kind of was an interesting perspective. I still hope to talk to him, I just haven't done it yet.

**A:** He's a computer freak.

**Q:** Yeah, right, he worked for The Chronicle, I think, the last time I talked to him. Anyway, I do get out there occasionally. I'm going to be out in the Bay area in November, but I'm going to a conference and I don't know how much extra time I'm going to have. If I have enough time I want to go up to around Booneville [??], so I'd pass right by there, basically.

**A:** Yeah, please give me a call.

**Q:** And if so, yeah, I'll call you and see what we can put together.

**A:** Give me a little lead time if you can.

**Q:** Yeah, I will, sure.

**A:** But if you can't, that's okay, too.

**Q:** Well, I'll know some weeks before I go what I'm locked into and what I'm not, so.

**A:** Okay.

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**Q:** Yeah, that'd be great.

**A:** I'd like it.

**Q:** Yeah, okay, well I really appreciate it and I hope we do get together.

**A:** That's alright.

**Q:** Tell me if you come to Kansas, but not too many people seem to come through here anymore.

**A:** I haven't been able to travel very much.

**Q:** Yeah, used to be everyone would just hop in the car and drive to the other coast or something, but that's not so common anymore.

**A:** That's not the way anymore.

**Q:** Well, okay. Well thanks and I appreciate it.

**A:** Thank you.

**Q:** I hope we connect before too long.

**A:** Me too.

**Q:** Okay, thanks Michael.

**A:** Take care, Tim.

**Q:** Mm-hmm. Goodbye.