



Young Men with Unlimited Capital: The Story of Woodstock

Joel Rosenman, John Roberts, Robert Pilpel

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It started with this ad, placed by Joel Rosenman and John Roberts as a way to find interesting work after college. It led Rosenman and Roberts to stage a gathering that changed the face of popular culture: the Woodstock Music and Art Fair in August 1969. Woodstock is rightly remembered as the pivotal event that united a generation, but the behind-the-scenes story is less utopian--and absolutely fascinating.

Rosenman and Roberts describe their shock as they realized, after a long struggle to find a site and placate area residents, that the festival was attracting a crowd ten times larger than expected, stalling traffic for miles around, and forcing thousands of ticket holders to be turned away. The instant city of Woodstock created mind-boggling logistical problems for Rosenman and Roberts: mud, shortages of food, water, and medical help, a death, births, bad drugs--and waking up their local banker in the middle of the night to get \$15,000 for The Who and the Grateful Dead, who refused to go onstage without cash in their pockets.

By the time Jimi Hendrix played "The Star-Spangled Banner" at 6:30 Monday morning, there were "only" 25,000 people left, but Rosenman and Roberts faced a sea of mud and trash, irate neighbors, bad press ("Nightmare in the Catskills"), staggering debts, and some seventy separate legal proceedings against them. But the ultimate impact of that weekend was far greater-and far more triumphal for all involved. Young Men With Unlimited Capital is both an amazing and humorous story, and one that chronicles a defining event of 1960's America.



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