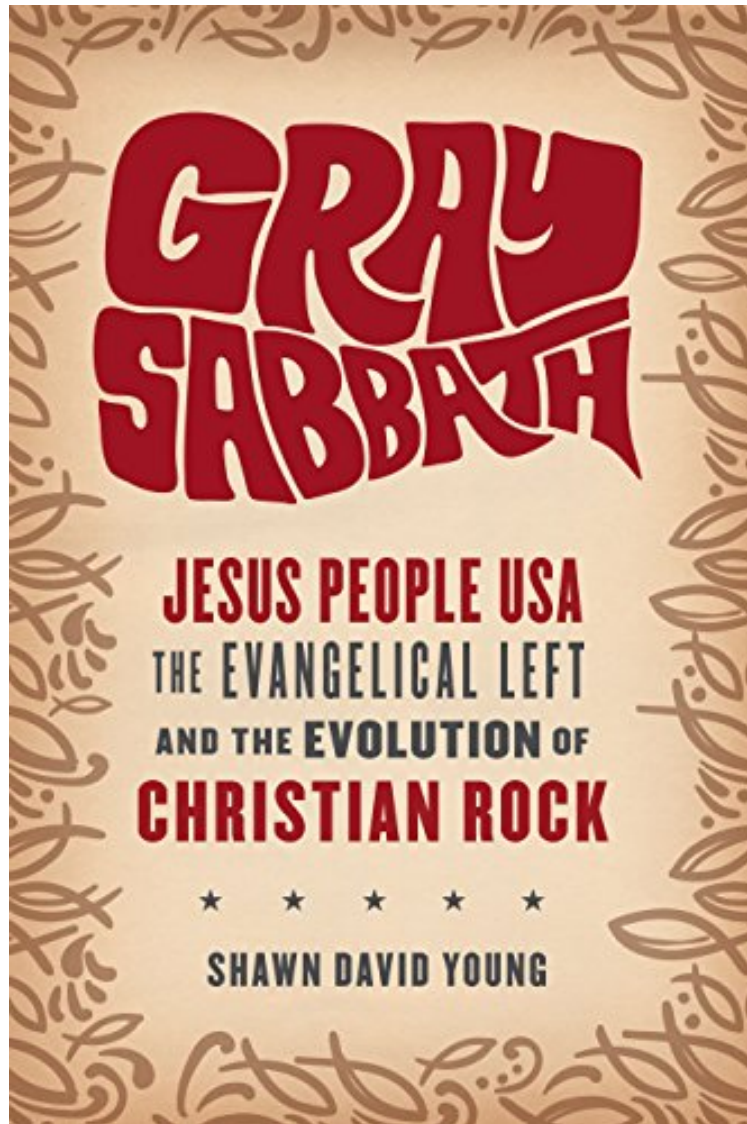


## Gray Sabbath: Jesus People USA, the Evangelical Left, and the Evolution of Christian Rock

Shawn Young

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**Shawn Young : Gray Sabbath: Jesus People USA, the Evangelical Left, and the Evolution of Christian Rock** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Gray Sabbath: Jesus People USA, the Evangelical Left, and the Evolution of Christian Rock:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Customerawesome...great service and fast shipping. this author is fantastic!!!1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Highly recommended for anyone who lived

through the Jesus Movement or wonders what it was like. By Jill Stevens If you were part of the Jesus Movement of the late 1960s and early 70s or were aware of it, then you're probably familiar with Chicago's Jesus People USA or JPUSA. They were one of the first Christian communities borne out of that movement and they are still in existence today. The wisely titled GRAY SABBATH (or the aging of those who were part of the Jesus Movement) takes an in-depth look at JPUSA and their Cornerstone music and arts festival, the evangelical left, and the evolution of Christian rock. This is an exhaustive, scholarly work that doesn't skip lightly over the time period. It digs deep and analyzes what it finds and includes some rare and terrific photographs. Through extensive interviews, we learn that life in a community as large as JPUSA is like being married to 500 people and if you wanted to date or marry someone, you must seek permission from family heads. The rigorous checks and balances were put in place because there was no real road map for the community leaders to follow. It wasn't as though there were plenty of people to ask. Christian community among evangelicals is almost unheard of, and was even more so in the mid-seventies. For those who chose to live at JPUSA, the understanding was that you would stay there for the rest of your life. That wasn't always preached in so many words, but it was clearly the subtext. And to leave was to break your commitment to your brothers and sisters, like a giant divorce. GRAY SABBATH doesn't just peek behind the curtain of JPUSA, it yanks down the drapes so we see for ourselves what daily life is like for the men, women and children who inhabit the Friendly Towers. Some of the founding members still remain in the community, others have left and no longer consider themselves Christians, while some have left yet remain in contact with their former family. It was interesting and surprising to learn that only fifteen percent of those raised in JPUSA remain, and of all adult members, twenty-three percent have left the community over the years. The allegations of physical abuse, sexual assault, and excessive authoritarian control are all addressed in a balanced and well-documented manner. For those curious about the impact of the Cornerstone festival, Chapter 6: The Christian Woodstock, makes for a fascinating and informative read, and the author's passion for music is clearly evident. The author writes, Though powerful in content and scope, evangelical Christianity appears to walk with a limp and GRAY SABBATH attempts to diagnose the cause for that injury. His honest and respectful examination of JPUSA and its use as a microcosm for the post-modern church makes for an excellent resource and is highly recommended to anyone who lived through the Jesus Movement or wonders what it was like. Gray Sabbath: Jesus People USA, the Evangelical Left, and the Evolution of Christian Rock 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I first heard Rez Band in the 1980s. From ... By Matt I first heard Rez Band in the 1980s. From there I learned about and attended their annual music festival called Cornerstone. I also heard that the members of Rez Band lived in a commune called Jesus People USA (JPUSA). The nature of JPUSA and their commune was a mystery to me. Gray Sabbath opens the doors of JPUSA's fascinating way of life by tracing JPUSA's historical roots and providing an objective and honest view of both the benefits and the challenges of communal living. Gray Sabbath examines how JPUSA relates to its home town of Chicago and to American culture in general. While most Christian communes that formed around the same time as JPUSA have disbanded, a number of factors unique to JPUSA has allowed it to survive to this day. Gray Sabbath examines those factors and looks ahead critically with the question of whether JPUSA can thrive into the future.

Formed in 1972, Jesus People USA is an evangelical Christian community that fundamentally transformed the American Christian music industry and the practice of American evangelicalism, which continues to evolve under its influence. In this fascinating ethnographic study, Shawn David Young replays not only the growth and influence of the group over the past three decades but also the left-leaning politics it developed that continue to serve as a catalyst for change. Jesus People USA established a still-thriving Christian commune in downtown Chicago and a ground-breaking music festival that redefined the American Christian rock industry. Rather than join "establishment" evangelicalism and participate in what would become the megachurch movement, this community adopted a modified socialism and embraced forms of activism commonly associated with the New Left. Today the ideological tolerance of Jesus People USA aligns them closer to liberalism than to the religious right, and Young studies the embodiment of this liminality and its challenge to mainstream evangelical belief. He suggests the survival of this group is linked to a growing disenchantment with the separation of public and private, individual and community, and finds echoes of this postmodern faith deep within the evangelical subculture.

A compelling story of the evolution of both an intentional Christian commune and of a generation of Christians who have become increasingly disenchanted with the religious right's subservience to the Republican Party. As such, Jesus People USA presents a possible model of what the theological and political future of evangelicalism could become. (Jay Howard, Butler University) Shawn David Young's book Gray Sabbath explores the rocky evolution of Jesus People USA (JPUSA) from fundamentalist Jesus freak commune to artsy urban ministry colony in one of Chicago's poorest neighborhoods. Using JPUSA's influential Cornerstone Music Festival as a lens, Young illuminates the community's struggles and--ultimately--changes in the larger evangelical subculture. Gray Sabbath is absolutely essential reading for anyone seeking to understand the cultural and political complexities of contemporary American evangelicalism. (Larry Eskridge, author of God's Forever Family: The Jesus People Movement in America) Shawn

Young's book drills deep into a remarkable patch of the Jesus Movement recently mapped by Larry Eskridge. The Jesus People USA commune is sui generis for many reasons, not least for managing to survive in inner-city Chicago since the year George McGovern ran for president. Deeply researched and theoretically sophisticated, this ambitious study will hold interest for students of the Jesus Movement, Christian popular music, American evangelicalism, and intentional communities. (David W. Stowe, author of *No Sympathy for the Devil: Christian Pop Music and the Transformation of American Evangelicalism*) Jesus People USA was decades ahead of its time, embodying a committed Christian faith that was biblical and deeply committed to works of mercy. Today's new monasticism and emerging churches reflect JPUSA's pioneering thrust, and Young shows how it all came about. (Timothy Miller, University of Kansas) In *Gray Sabbath*, Shawn David Young tells a riveting story about Jesus People USA and the Cornerstone music festival, a tale of cultural currents and evangelical adjustments in the face of social changes. But this narrative is larger than that, both cautionary tale and a blueprint for a more hopeful future for evangelicalism. This is a very good and important book. (Randall Balmer, author of *The Making of Evangelicalism*)

About the Author Shawn David Young is director of music industry and recording technology at York College of Pennsylvania, where he also teaches courses in American studies. He has published research on the counterculture of the 1960s, communal living, music festivals, the politics of popular music, and Christian rock music in a number of journals, including *VOLUME! The French Journal of Popular Music Studies*, *Religion Compass*, *Religions*, and the *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture*.