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Notes & Comments

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Speaking up for the Fifties

On the roots of the Sixties.

This spring marks the fortieth anniversary of that climactic of cultural catastrophe, 1968, when for a moment the forces of anarchy and malignant sentimentality seemed poised to overrun the bulwarks of civilization in the West. We are pleased to publish in this issue “The Sixties at 40,” an important reflection on that critical moment by Peter Collier, who lived through *les événements* as a participant observer. The spirit of the Sixties, Collier suggests, didn’t die, exactly; rather, it’s been absorbed as a sort of toxic parody: “a fate worse than death as its anarchic brio dissolves into a glutinous mixture of revisionism, political correctness, multicultural clichés, and progressivism.”

We can’t improve on that, but the spate of anniversary commemorations—five parts celebration, one part condemnation—of the Sixties prompts us t ...

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