

I'm with the Band Study Guide

I'm with the Band by Pamela Des Barres

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Plot Summary

I'm With the Band, by Pamela Des Barres, is a tell-all of the author's youthful groupie adventures. Amplifying diary entries with vivid recollections, Miss Des Barres captures freedoms and attitudes as they bloom alongside flower power during the 1960s. A mass awareness has overtaken a generation, and something is in the air. Music and musicians represent social and political change. Few possess Miss Pamela's dedication, but her story portrays American Baby Boomer life as it comes of age and matures. Rock and Roll feeds rebel fantasies and, while her peers protest the war and march for causes, Miss Des Barres actualizes fantasies which, for her, evolve from lust into a quest for true love.

The author starts off with Pamela Miller, as a teen, watching in horror as Elvis gets his hair shaved for his Army stint. Quoted song lyrics elicit a sound-track that links teenagers across America. She swoons over teen idols Paul Anka and Dion. When British accents saturate the Top 40, her senses awaken. Innocent daydreaming takes on carnal awareness. She writes explicit letters and poetry to Paul McCartney. After attending a Beatles concert, she feels compelled sneak into The Beatles' Bel Air hotel to meet Paul who, upon meeting Pam, will forget all others. The unaccomplished mission whets her appetite for more missions.

The new music has Pam wearing new fashions and adopting new attitudes, all of which signify change for a better world. A fellow high school student introduces her to "Captain Beefheart", and she soon becomes a fixture on Sunset Strip. She starts listening to Dylan lyrics and Rolling Stones records and enters a hip circle of friends whose lifestyle personifies a burgeoning counterculture. For Pam, this culture embodies truth-seeking as well as sex appeal. Her Sunset Strip outings have her rubbing body parts with members of Love, The Doors, Traffic, and others who burned cultural brands in the music scene. A close friendship with four other girls who share her musician interest, draws the attention of Frank Zappa into creating an all-girl group known as The GTO's.

The GTOs, or Girls Together Outrageously, develop as an opening act for Zappa and gain marginal fame by association. Write ups in *Rolling Stone* and other publications give status to the five groupies, and GTO notoriety leads Pamela to meet and pursue Noel Redding of the Jimi Hendrix Experience, Mick Jagger, Jimmy Page of Led Zeppelin, and Keith Moon of The Who, among others. Pam, who now is called "Pamela", works hard to become the woman on the arm of a rock star. However, her trysts and favors more often than not keep her waiting on the sidelines. She endures much anguish as the grapevine carries news of girlfriends or wives in England. She faces the reality of her groupie counterparts at every tour stop her British-accented lovers hook up with in every city. Jimmy Page whispers beautiful possibilities, but never takes her to England as his wife. In between affairs with each artist that comes to town, Pamela attempts to jumpstart an acting career. She feels it in her bones she is meant to be famous. Her SAG card and social connections also lead into romance with Don Johnson and Brandon De Wilde.



Often, Pamela's life is contradictory. In many journal entries, she questions what she is doing with her life. Through her early cavorting, she manages to keep her virginity for quite a long time, while satiating her many long-haired lovers. One moment she is the ultimate mistress to Chris Hillman, Jimmy Page, and Mick Jagger. Simultaneously, she makes eight cents per dance at a dance hall, satisfying fantasies of nerdish, lonely men to save for a trip to England—a trip Jimmy Page or Mick Jagger should cover.

In spite of Miss Pamela's talent with the opposite sex, time is passing her by. She is in her twenties and realizes her acting career is not taking off and she is not becoming as famous as she feels she is meant to be. She is a GTO with a record out, but hand-sews cowboy shirts for her musician boyfriends as well as to make ends meet. She has no career to speak of or fall back on. Perceived as "old" at twenty-four by younger groupies, Miss Pamela's search for true love terminates with Michael Des Barres, whose fame is marginal but whose true affection and dedication brings her great happiness as well as a son.



Chapter 1, Let Me Put It In It Feels All Right

Chapter 1, Let Me Put It In It Feels All Right Summary and Analysis

I'm With the Band, by Pamela Des Barres, is a tell-all of the author's youthful groupie adventures. Amplifying diary entries with vivid recollections, Miss Des Barres captures freedoms and attitudes as they bloom alongside flower power during the 1960s. A mass awareness has overtaken a generation, and something is in the air. Music and musicians represent social and political change. Few possess Miss Pamela's dedication, but her story portrays American Baby Boomer life as it comes of age and matures. Rock and Roll feeds rebel fantasies and, while her peers protest the war and march for causes, Miss Des Barres actualizes fantasies which, for her, evolve from lust into a quest for true love.

Like most of her peers in the 1960s, Pamela lives with a transistor radio attached to her ear. January of 1964 finds Pam making a list of resolutions that include getting better grades, discarding vulgar language, and not wasting money on "trash". The Beatles take center-stage for millions across America, and she becomes a "total blithering, idiotic Beatlemaniac".

In August, she attends a Beatles concert, and she and three other "Beatles friends" go to Bel Air to try to meet them. They befriend Ronny Lewis, one of Jerry Lewis's sons, to get a step up over hundreds of others who have similar plans to gain Beatles access. Lewis sneaks them past his property, but an army of cops guard "what was obviously THE BEATLE HOUSE". The cops haul them away after a cold night of hiding in bushes. As the squad car drives them away, a limousine passes them. She sees John Lennon and catches a look on his face "full of sorrow and contempt".

At school, Pam meets Victor Haydon, who is trouble with his long hair and unconventional ways. Pam's Beatles friends accuse her of betraying the Beatles faith and deem her a phony. In turn, she calls them close-minded for judging her, because she has sufficient love to cover the heaven/hell dichotomy which the Beatles and Stones represent for many. Her sexual play with Bob leaves her with needs which Mick Jagger's voice fulfills through stereo speakers. Victor Haydon introduces Pam to his cousin, named "Captain Beefheart", who is in "The Magic Band".

In May of 1965, the Stones come to Los Angeles to record. Lingered around the studio parking lot, she and friends meet Mick Jagger as he gets into his rented car. He asks them for directions to the Ambassador Hotel. Knowing where the Stones are staying, Pam and company meander around the grounds, attempting to get attention from a Stone by knocking on windows.



Chapter 2, The Time To Hesitate Is Through

Chapter 2, The Time To Hesitate Is Through Summary and Analysis

Pam waits outside Ciro's for The Byrds, who have just released their first single. She is wild over the bassist, Chris Hillman, who barely acknowledges her. Undeterred, she finds out where the band members reside in Laurel Canyon, and spends "hours peeking into windows." She finds Chris Hillman's abode and performs somersaults to get the twenty-one-year-old to look at her, but Chris has more than one girlfriend. In her April 26, Pam refers to her obsession with Chris Hillman as "Operation Chris". She knocks on his door with a kitten as a present. He can't keep the kitten because he is on the road so much, but she is in heaven in his Jaguar as he drives her off the premises.

Pam gets invited to the birthday party of an eccentric fifty-year-old artist named Vito. Vito, his wife, and three-year-old son, "Godot", live above an antique store which they run. Pam's next encounter with Vito and company is at the funeral for Lenny Bruce. A few days after the funeral, Pam hears the DJ at KDAY say that he is looking for a blond, blue-eyed girl who attended the Lenny Bruce eulogy and describes the exact clothing Pam had on. If she is listening, she is to contact him regarding a possible "movie project". It turns out Pam is the image for the title character of "Candy".

Pam attends a peace demonstration and refers to the start of the "revolution". On the Strip she makes new girlfriends, one of whom is named Beverly. At the Whiskey A-Go-Go they meet a new house band known as Iron Butterfly. She "merges" with their music as well as with their members and shows music appreciation by giving "head" to each member.

Wanting to experience flower power, she travels to Haight-Ashbury with her "one remaining Beatle friend, Linda". Pam is turned off by the disheveled hippie scene.

Pam returns home to her comfortable room and the clubs on the Strip. There's a new band, whose lead singer mesmerizes her. One day while visiting a friend in Laurel Canyon, she hears the music she's been hearing from the mesmerizing singer at the club. Investigating, she peeks through a window and sees, "Jim Morrison in the FLESH, wearing nothing but his black leather pants, was digging around the fridge, humming along with 'The End'".

In her Tramar state, she approaches him and he gets high with her. Morrison makes time for Pam at the Hullabaloo where the Doors are playing. A year later, she sees him in another club. She writes that Jim Morrison is violent and disturbed. She last sees him before he goes to Paris.



Chapter 3, Have you Ever Been Experienced?

Chapter 3, Have you Ever Been Experienced? Summary and Analysis

Pamela befriends Sparky, a girl who went to her junior and high school, although they never knew each other then. Sparky and Pam befriend another girl named Lucy at one of their friend Vito's strange parties. Pam meets a photographer, Allen Daviau, who takes free pictures of her for her acting portfolio. He invites her to dance in a film with the Jimi Hendrix Experience. Jimi Hendrix makes a pass at her as she enters, but she passes up the offer. Her eye is on Noel Redding, who backs Jimi up on bass. Impressed with her virginity, Redding wants to be Pam's "first". He leaves for his tour back to London and writes to her from there. For the first time, she's "with the band".

Even though Pam is crazy over Bryan MacLean, the lead guitarist for Love, he only wants to be friends. Her friends Sandra and Lucy live in a log cabin built by Tom Mix in Laurel Canyon. There is a new girl named Christine, who avoids sex because she is "frigid". Frank Zappa moves into the log cabin, forcing the girls to find other abodes. Lucy, Christine, Sparky, Sandra and Pam drop in on the Zappa family. His wife, Gail, and their baby, Moon Unit, impress Pam with the hip family concept. Gail is what Pam wants to become—the wife of a rock star. Noting that Christine likes to clean and has a knack with Moon Unit, Gail offers her a live-in position taking care of the baby and doing household tasks.

Christine's job facilitates Pam and the others in becoming regulars at the Zappa house. One day they all show up wearing identical outfits. Frank Zappa "flips" and asks them to dance on stage as part of the Mothers of Invention act. He renames them the GTOs. During this time, Pam falls in love with a narcissistic blond boy named Nick St. Nicholas. In the past she's been able to hold her virginity intact, but he is more insistent than most. Obsessed with his beauty, she gives in.

Lucy introduces them to Tiny Tim, whom she knew in New York. During the visit, Mr. Tim takes four showers and plays hockey with the girls in his kitchen. He refers to the girls as "Miss Lucy, Miss Sandra, Miss Sparky, Miss Christine, and Miss Pamela". From this point on, the individual GTO girls are referred to as "Miss Pamela, Miss Sparky, etc.".



Chapter 4, Sweetheart of The Rodeo

Chapter 4, Sweetheart of The Rodeo Summary and Analysis

The GTOs give their first serious stage performance. Frank Zappa detects potential talent in the GTOs and urges them to write some songs while he goes on tour. He mentions the GTOs in an article that appears in Life Magazine. A new girl, known as Miss Mercy, comes into the scene. There is conflict between her and Miss Lucy over a guy named Bernardo, but Mr. Zappa deems her a good addition to the GTOs due to her outlandish look. Mercy brings another girl named Cynderella, "a confirmed fibber" who has great lyrical ideas.

Pamela gets sidelined in the hospital with hepatitis, but gets a clean bill of health just as the Jimi Hendrix Experience arrives in town. She contacts Noel Redding, who invites her to the hotel where the group is staying. She shows up and makes love with him.

Upon returning from his tour, Zappa reviews the girls' writings. He likes what he reads and assigns the task of putting it to music to "Newmother", Lowell George. Zappa has several projects brewing. One is with the Plaster Casters of Chicago, two groupies who gain notoriety for making plaster casts of famous musicians' fully erect penises.

Some of the characters who join Zappa's troupe repulse her. One is "Wild Man Fischer", whom Zappa signs to his label, Bizarre Records. She has to deal further with this person when Zappa books his "entourage" to do a Christmas show with Alice Cooper, the GTOs, Wild Man Fischer, and the Mothers of Invention.

Pamela's "precious Chris Hillman" of Byrds fame starts a group known as the Flying Burrito Brothers, who are one of the first Country Rock groups. Mercy is the only GTO who accompanies Miss Pamela to Burrito shows, because country music turns the others off. Gram Parsons, who is in the group, befriends Pamela. Practice for the Christmas show goes on in spite of squabbles among the girls.

Wanting to meet her creative idol, Miss Pamela takes a trip to Chicago to meet Cynthia Plastercaster. She is very shy in ways that have Pamela wondering how she ever accomplished what she did. Cynthia's artwork is truly impressive, and the two cavort for two weeks exchanging groupie tales, experiences, and fantasies. Cynthia has a poster on her wall "of a group I had yet to hear of—four gorgeous Englishmen called Led Zeppelin".

Upon returning, Miss Pamela moves out of her parent's house and moves in with a friend of Gram Parsons's. Andee Cohen is a photographer with many hip friends who is in need of a roommate in her Santa Monica Boulevard apartment. Chris Hillman, now separated from his wife, calls Pamela at her new apartment, and she "slid onto the floor in a delirious heap of mush. . .".



Zappa is delaying making the GTO LP, which Mercy wants to title, "Permanent Damage". Pamela is worried over Christine, Cynderella, and Mercy, who live in a motel and are shooting heroin. Zappa is against drug use and shouldn't find out. Andee does the shoot for the GTO album cover. After the session, she meets her "first Beatle". George Harrison tells her he looks forward to their album. She is in heaven.

Rolling Stone dedicates an issue to the groupie scene and places the GTOs in its centerfold. Each girl is interviewed. Pamela carries the issue with her journal and Burrito Brothers photographs. Gram Parsons invites Pamela to meet his girlfriend, Nancy, and his little daughter, Polly. Pamela gets along well with the baby and is asked to babysit. Miss Pamela makes an observation about men as Chris Hillman, Gram and a new friend, Brandon De Wilde converse. "When a man's head is with his friends—or somewhere that he's fond—he doesn't know you're there, but it's not because of you or that he doesn't care!". Now that she's Gram's sitter, he invites Pamela to sing on the new Burrito Brothers album and Chris Hillman asks her out. She writes poetry because things are the way she always thought it was meant to be for her and Chris Hillman—true love.



Chapter 5, Every Inch Of My Love

Chapter 5, Every Inch Of My Love Summary and Analysis

The next morning, Chris Hillman's attitude is cold, and she realizes that dreams of being his girl or wife will remain a fantasy. The Flying Burrito Brothers go on tour and she stays with actor Brandon de Wilde. De Wilde is tired of acting, and after twenty-five years decides to try singing. He has split from his wife and he and Pamela become a couple on the rebound.

Sex is constant and she snorts too much cocaine to keep up with Brandon. She realizes her thing with Brandon is only a rebound affair. Brandon requires much attention, and she returns to her parents' home for a while.

Upon hearing that the Burrito tour is canceled, Pamela spends three days with Hillman until he goes silent again. She cries only a little less than the first time. Zappa is bringing Cynthia Plaster Caster to LA at the same time as the Jimi Hendrix Experience. Pamela works long and hard sewing and embroidering a cowboy shirt for Hillman. The next time she sees it, Michael Clarke (drummer) is wearing it after winning it in a poker game. Despite her sadness, making these shirts becomes a source of income.

Noel Redding offers to take her to England which ends her friendship with Cynthia. The next night, she and Mercy see Led Zeppelin at the Whiskey for the first time. They follow them to another club and observe Zeppelin and their entourage's orgiastic carryings on in the back. Jimmy Page sits apart, "overseer, creator, impeccably gorgeous perfect pop star, and he was staring right at me".

In May, Miss Pamela takes LSD and understands why hippies "see God". The experience leads her to get away to visit an aunt and uncle in Kentucky. The journey is miserable and dangerous for a young girl hitching rides. She returns to LA and moves into a bigger apartment next to Andee's, with a girl named Michele Myer. The GTO's are rehearsing again and will finish the album.

The GTOs finally lay down tracks under Zappa's direction. She hears that Chris Hillman has wed a third time. While the GTOs record, news of Brian Jones's sudden death reaches them. Led Zeppelin comes into town, and hoards of groupies accost them at "The Experience". Robert Plant and the rest are there, except Jimmy Page. Richard Cole, one of their roadies, heads toward Pamela and hands her a phone number and says Jimmy is waiting for her. She stays seated, watching Bo Diddley instead of going.

Jimmy Page calls from Zeppelin's next tour stop in Texas. He tells her he is her "knight in shining Armour" and speaks of peacocks that walk outside his window in England, giving the idea that he has a future with her in mind. He gives her a silver turquoise ring which makes her "wonder if she's going steady with the best guitar player in the world".



On August 6th, Miss Pamela describes that their bodies are meant to be together. She sees the whips in his suitcase, disbelieving such a sweet face has sadistic needs. He tells her not to worry because he will not use them on her.

They discuss wishing they'd met under other circumstances. He vows not to let fame get in the way, "but inserted a clause that allowed him to 'do things'" on the road. People tease about how well their affair is going. Michele Overman writes in Pamela's journal, "My dearest Pamela, . . . I have a nice bit of information for you. Robert said 'She's the best thing Jimmy's found and he knows it,' speaking of you of course". After a concert in Anaheim Stadium, instead of attending a Zeppelin party, she and Jimmy go off together. They smoke and drink and "crash out" at the hotel. He promises to send for her before returning to Pangbourne.

On August 18th, Jimmy Page is on the road and calls her telling her the girls he brings back to his hotel disgust him and he "kicked them out". He promises to send for her around the 25th. Every journal entry from then on reflects despair. Just when all hope is gone, he calls saying he will send a plane ticket the "next morning". About to give up hope again, a messenger arrives with a TWA ticket. She spends three days in New York with Jimmy and even gets a seat right on his amp on stage.

Pamela begins to doubt if Zappa will ever release the album. Miss Pamela sews and sells shirts for the "Hollywood rock elite". She takes acting lessons, and dances at the Whiskey at night and is "madly in love" with Jimmy Page. She turns twenty-one, feeling she has done nothing with her life. She does not know half the people who show up at her party and almost misses Jimmy's call through the loud din.



Chapter 6, It's a Gas Gas Gas

Chapter 6, It's a Gas Gas Gas Summary and Analysis

Miss Pamela starts the chapter waiting for a call from Jimmy Page. Only "local yokels" or folks ordering shirts are calling. She and Michele go to the Palamino to see Waylon Jennings perform. She finds him attractive and sends him signals. After his set, she and Michele approach to say how much they appreciate his music.

She attends several strange events in between dreaming of being Jimmy Page's wife. She and Mercy go to see the Burritos playing in Topanga Canyon, and in walk the Rolling Stones. She dances, pretending not to be phased by their presence. Mick invites her and Mercy to their place in Laurel Canyon and starts coming on to her. She says no, but wonders where Jimmy is while she says no to Mick Jagger.

In October, Led Zeppelin is touring America. It upsets her that he does not fly her to where he is. She plans to wait two weeks, but Jagger is in the picture again. Again she says no. Worried Jimmy will find out, she deems herself masochistic for not sleeping with Mick. Her November 3rd journal entry has her fighting for sanity as she resists Jagger's caresses. Jimmy calls to say he's coming on his day off, but doesn't arrive. He calls to say he'll be there in the afternoon.

Instead, she flies out to him, but things are different. She is deep in pain as they walk into an art store in Sausalito. He buys some Escher etchings. He buys her a book of ethereal paintings, but she "feels him slipping away".

The Stones are playing at Oakland Stadium that night. Pamela and Michele find out that most groups stay at the Edgewater Inn and hitch a ride there. They hear guitars playing and meet Terry Reid, who tells them the Stones are "down the hall". Mick spots her and the girls watch the Stones practice. For the second time she sits on stage, with The Stones this time, and sees things from their perspective. Mick asks her to fly back to LA with them. She has already promised Michele to stay overnight with her.

A few days later, at The Whiskey, the Stones are in one of the booths, and Mick invites Pamela to sit beside him. Later, as they make love, she can't help but recall her fantasies in front of her hi-fi while listening to his record. Her November 25th entry has Pamela helping him pack suitcases. He gives her clothes. He speaks regretfully of wishing she had been with him weeks earlier.

Miss Pamela's December 6th entry recalls the infamous concert at Altamont. She leaves early because the atmosphere is unpleasant. Later, she calls the Stones's hotel and Mick is upset. He tells her to come over. Someone was shot and died right in front of them as they performed, he tells her.

It is hard to make ends meet on shirt-making alone, which forces her to take a job at "Danceland". The job entails dancing and conversing with "interesting men" for eight



cents a minute. She thinks of her dancing partners as "patients", who become regular clients, requesting her underpaid "therapy" services. Jimmy Page calls, asking if she can do him the favor of finding him Aleister Crowley paraphernalia. She finds a handwritten manuscript and sends it to Jimmy. Jimmy sends her a turquoise necklace, renewing her hopes.

Miss Christine, who is with Todd Rundgren, writes from London and includes a photo of Jimmy wearing one of Pam's shirts. Jimmy is said to be head over heels for a new lady named "Charlotte". Her January 20th entry asks God's help as to why. "Every relationship ends in utter emptiness: Nick St. Nicholas, Mr. Hillman and James", she writes.

As January ends, country singer Waylon Jennings is her first "older man". By mid-February, she is getting high with long-haired Chris Hillman again and bumps into Nick St. Nicholas, who tells her problems though she watches him and "Randy Jo" take their vows.

The GTOs' LP gets air play on FM radio, but does not chart on Billboard. The GTOs are not getting along well, and Miss Mercy is inhaling angel dust. Miss Sandra is now a new mother. Christine and Cynderella consider Pamela as fickle. Miss Christine is with Todd Rundgren in England, while Miss Pamela ponders her fickleness. However fickle she appears, Miss Pamela is desperate for sincere love.

Miss Cynderella has a friend in England who runs a famous shop on Kings Road. She suggests Pam write to his partner, Marty. Marty is originally a New Yorker who is now a trendsetter, and dresses Robert Plant and Mick Jagger. Marty comes to LA, and after a shy start, romance sparks between them. It is not the same as with Hillman or Page, but she becomes hooked on Marty. There is a problem in that it is difficult to be loyal to Pamela, although he claims to love her. Led Zeppelin comes to town for two nights and Marty watches Pamela pacing. When she wonders why Jimmy hasn't called, Marty tells her to go ahead and call him.

On April 11th, she and Marty go to The Whiskey, "and there is Jimmy's sweet face". He tells her they will always be friends and that she is his favorite person in America. He asks for her phone number so they can talk more. He tells Pamela he is in love and hopes that she's happy with Marty.

Her April 13th entry has Robert Plant insisting she attend the concert and leaving cab money for her. The impression is that the other band members consider her good for Jimmy. Robert Plant insists that they will not "go on until I'm there". Marty becomes angry, but relents, and Pamela is "sure he'll go out tonight and pluck someone".

On April 14th, Miss Pamela goes to Zeppelin's hotel. She and Jimmy talk until morning about "happinesses, sadnesses, truths, untruths, Charlotte and Marty". They hug "lightly", promising to stay friends. It is difficult convincing Marty that she didn't sleep with Jimmy, although Marty obviously took care of his needs. He is her boyfriend.



The GTOs schedule a tour with Todd Rundgren's group, Runt. Marty is unable to find a place that is hip enough for his boutique collection in LA, and returns to London. He and Pam promise to save money for her to join him there.

On May 12th, Pamela's entry is joyful. She is about to "lift" off for England. She is happy to be alive and is grateful for all she has.



Chapter 7, Dedicated Follower of Fashion

Chapter 7, Dedicated Follower of Fashion Summary and Analysis

Due to an unexplained mix-up, Miss Pamela winds up in first class next to songwriter, Jimmy Webb. A friendship forms, and thanks to his celebrity, she is able to skip Customs. Marty doesn't know she is in London and she plans to surprise him. She can take her time accompanying Jimmy Web to see the "pad" he plans to purchase.

While Marty works days, Pamela takes in London's sights. At night, the two hit the in-crowd clubs. She awaits a call regarding the GTOs tour with Todd Rundgren which never comes. Michelle Overone is in London following Robert Plant, who is not leaving his wife and kids for her. Pamela becomes friendly with Catherine James, her predecessor with Jimmy Page. She is having a hard time with Denny Laine of the Moody Blues and the father of her little boy.

Marty still claims to be in love with Pamela but cannot be sexually loyal. Pamela explains in her diary—perhaps to herself—that Marty needs to be desired in order to feel complete. One day Mick Jagger shows up at Mary's trend-setting boutique to pick up a suit. He is overjoyed to see Pamela and drops everything to take her in his arms.

While Marty works, Mick visits Miss Pamela, and although she loves Marty, she is too much "the ultimate groupie, and Mick was in the ultimate group". Considering Marty's "indiscretions", she feels no guilt over carrying on with Mick Jagger. He tells her he likes her in between signing countless autographs. They return to his house, put on a Dylan record, get very high, and make love on piled pillows.

Todd Rundgren calls to say that the tour is canceled. Marty asks why she puts up with him. She has no money and her hopes for fame with the GTOs deflate. She contacts the GTO manager, pleading for money with which she takes a side trip with Renee, one of Vito's dancers, to Paris, Rome, Salzburg, Vienna, and Holland. There they run out of cash and the two fall into the business of selling "Keef, a crumbly, potent char-colored substance, stronger than hash". They sell enough keef for tickets back to England.

Marty greets her without enthusiasm. He is no longer in love with Pamela. She tearfully packs and goes to stay with Mickey from Danceland, who is also in London. She lives under a marijuana haze in an effort to dull the pain of her newly broken heart. Mickey nurses her through the heartbreak until one day she feels no need to reach for a joint.

With her mind clear, she calls Mick to tell him she is available and there is no longer a need to carry on secretly. However, "a lady named Bianca answered the phone". Bianca



tells Pamela to never call there again. She turns twenty-two at Noel Redding's house in Kent. She has no money, no career, and no boyfriend.

She meets Sandy, the bass player for the Pink Fairies, a progressive group in England which will soon release an album. She needs to forget Marty, and Sandy's big brown eyes tell her he loves her immediately. Promising to be true to Sandy, she travels to LA with intent to make enough money to return to England. She expects Sandy will soon be reveling in enough money to support them both.

Living at her parents' place again, she knows she has to act or sing or do something creative that will make her as famous as she feels she is destined to become. Instead, she works at Danceland and takes another job in the Valley. Sandy calls her one day and proposes. The very next day she meets Tony Sales, Soupy Sales's son. Soon she is emotionally involved with Tony, who is still a teenager. When letters from Sandy arrive, she cringes. He sends her a plane ticket, and she decides to travel to London, to sort out her feelings.

The moment she sees Sandy at the airport, she knows she is no longer in love with him. Pamela feels awful, having been a victim to the exact same cruelty herself. Frank Zappa and his wife, Gail, who are in London, call her to read for a part in his new movie, "200 Motels", a musical written by Zappa about "the lunacy" of life on the road. Miss Pamela meets her "second" Beatle, because Ringo Starr is playing the lead. Her January 29th entry describes herself talking to Ringo, who confides that Paul is suing the other Beatles, which is to her "another bubble burst".

During that project, Pamela also meets Keith Moon, the drummer of The Who. Her affair with Tony fizzles out. Her friendship with Gail Zappa grows. Pamela becomes Moon Unit and Dweezil Zappa's live-in nanny. She meets a character named Chuck Wein, also known as "the Wizard". Through his guidance, she becomes a vegetarian. She throws the I Ching and learns to read tarot cards. Jim Morrison dies in Paris and she wonders what the purpose of it all is.

Led Zeppelin is playing at the Riot House. She speaks to Jimmy Page in passing, and does not explain in detail how she gets an invite to Robert Plant's room, who tells her he's "wanted to do this for a long time". He also tells her Jimmy isn't happy at home and wants her to be with him. Jimmy enters the limo, reaches for her, and she spends the night with him. Robert expresses regrets at having passed her up for Jimmy's sake.

200 Motels opens up to "thunderous confusion". The Hollywood Reporter singles out Pamela Miller. She's on a billboard on Sunset Boulevard. She and Mercy spend time in Chuck Wein's "communal abode". They smoke pot and attempt to tap into "the third eye". She tries to convince her parents to go vegetarian.



Chapter 8, I Met Him on a Monday and My Heart Stood Still

Chapter 8, I Met Him on a Monday and My Heart Stood Still Summary and Analysis

Mercy introduces Pamela to "Donnie Wayne Johnson", a young actor, who lives next door to Chuck Wein. One thing leads to another and the two wind up romantically involved. However, The Who comes to town, and Keith Moon calls her. Keith wants her company and she spends time carrying out Keith's strange fantasies. He confesses to having accidentally run over one of his roadies, and lives with constant turmoil over causing his death. While she is with Keith Moon, Gail attempts to cover for her.

Don's temper explodes because he wasn't considered to be asked to a Who party. His anger dissipates into love-making, but he takes off in the middle of the night, and does not call her for five days. When he shows up again, it is to ask if she had sex with anyone else because he has contracted an infection from her. Unable to lie, she tells him the truth. He leaves, and she believes she has lost the best thing that has ever happened to her. He calls later, saying they can't resolve their problems by ending the affair. She is confused by the variance of his emotions.

On December 18, 1971, Donnie tells Pamela that he loves her. She loves him too, and tries to live up to the image that he wants of her in his efforts to make her a "better person". She gives her two-week notice to Gail because she wants to spend all her time with Donnie. However, Donnie is depressed because he isn't getting roles, and takes it out on Pamela. She begins to feel trapped in a relationship that has her dedicating everything to him.

Each time Donnie goes for an acting role and doesn't get it, he loses his temper. Lack of employment has him broke and Pamela helps pay his "Hollywood Hills rent" by making shirts. He finally gets a lead role in *The Harrad Experiment*. Donnie is so moody, but it is momentous to Pamela that they move in together. She has lived with others, but this time it is a joint effort. When he comes home, they make love every day. However his "humongous bad temper" strikes unexpectedly.

While Donnie is on the set, Pamela is suspicious of all the women there. The presence of Tippy Hedren's fourteen-year-old daughter, Melanie, begins to threaten their relationship. Donnie claims innocence, but the little girl always tags along. In the meantime, Pamela finds another job, which she can barely focus on. One day she overhears a conversation between Donnie and little Melanie on the phone. The gist of it tells Pamela it isn't the first time.

Pamela decides to take a road trip with Renee to clear her mind. Still obsessed with Donnie, she returns to LA. Things appear normal between herself and Donnie. She



cooks for him and they make love. However, Donnie accompanies Melanie and her mother to a renaissance fair as if it is nothing.

The Rolling Stones come to town and she drowns her sorrows in "his Satanic Majesty" and awakens up confused in her old room at the Zappa household. She has no clue how she got there. The last thing she remembers is "poking around in Mick's pants". Donnie wants to know where she's been and she tells him. He is "irate" to say the least, and admits to his romance with Melanie. He sees nothing wrong about seeing Melanie on the side, since Melanie is "alright" with Pamela in the picture.

Led Zeppelin comes to town and she loses herself with Jimmy Page, who is now getting very high. She spends two weeks with him when she gets word that her old friend and lover Brandon De Wilde has died in a car accident. The loss of this friend affects her for a long time.

Chris Hillman has a new band with Steven Stills and they are playing at the Hollywood Bowl. She calls backstage and Chris urges her to hurry over. After her relationship with Don, she can have an adult conversation with Chris. He goes on tour and they part as friends. On her 24th birthday, Don Johnson takes her out. He tells her that he and Melanie are getting engaged. It is possible that Pamela includes the raging sex she reports with Donnie in hopes that Melanie will one day read her book. The chapter ends with Pamela's new obsession: she starts leaving phone messages for Marlon Brando after seeing the film "One-eyed Jacks".



Chapter 9, Take My Hand, Take My Whole Life Too

Chapter 9, Take My Hand, Take My Whole Life Too Summary and Analysis

Miss Christine is found dead from an overdose in a Boston hotel. All hopes of reviving the GTO's are obliterated. Pamela has no idea what will become of her life.

Her journal becomes "an ongoing letter to Marlon Brando" while she continues to look for "Mr. Right". She confesses to being desperate for affection. Jimmy Page abandons her for a thirteen-year-old named Lori Lightening.

Pamela returns to her nanny job with the Zappas. She becomes temporarily involved with a member of a Chicano group Frank Zappa is producing. Waylon Jennings is at the Troubadour and Pamela shows up to tantalize. In the ladies room she bumps into Patti Boyd, wondering if her husband, George Harrison, is there. After his set, Waylon introduces her to Willie Nelson and Bob Dylan.

Ray Davis of the Kinks and Keith Moon of The Who arrive in town and Pamela caters to their respective insanities. Chris Hillman calls to say he's coming to town. She meets up with Don Johnson for more clandestine payback. She imagines the doubtless happily married lives of her old Beatles friends. She's never lived alone before and she finds an apartment in Charlie Chaplin's old castle. She dates a few of what she refers to as "normal" guys. One works for Marlon Brando, and she confesses to using him in order to meet the actor. Through all of this, she aches for true love.

Alone she attends a showing of Brando's film, *Last Tango in Paris*. She goes home and leaves Marlon Brando another message on his machine. This time, he picks up the phone himself in the middle of her message. Marlon Brandon proceeds to tell her that all the answers are within herself, while she listens wordlessly.

Soon she is melting over actor Lane Caudell, who, except for his looks, embodies the complete opposite of her taste in men. He hunts, eats meat, and starts fights. She is called to New York to be in a low-budget film being directed by Chuck Wien. During filming, she meets Michael Des Barres, the lead singer for Silverhead. They have much in common. Chuck Wein films Silverhead performing in a packed house in New York. Michael tells her he loves the GTO LP and that he had a crush on her in 1970.

Michael doesn't reveal to Pamela that he is only recently married. She returns to filming. Lane writes, but as usual, sounds "aloof" about commitment. Michael calls on the road, saying he misses her. Her February 7th entry finds Pamela dining with Woody Allen, whom she met at Elaine's while in New York. She spends days with Woody, avoiding autograph hounds. Over several dinners, Woody finds her groupie story fascinating.



There is a suggestion that the Annie Hall character took seed over dinner with Pamela Miller.

Back home in Hollywood, she divides her time at the Hyatt with Michael Des Barres and with Lane Caudell in his North Hollywood apartment. Michael calls on the phone demanding that she come and join him. He tells her his father is a "marquis" and that she could be a marquis instead of a "commoner" as well. The next day she meets Michael at his hotel.

Seeing Lane again, Pamela is getting tired of his "male" silences. Michael is growing on her. When she sees him perform, she is hooked. On February 25th, her diary notes it is George Harrison's birthday as well as the fact that, if truth be told, Lane is handsome, but not her type. She stops seeing Lane.

Michael doesn't mind that she's been with Jimmy Page and Mick Jagger. Michael returns to England to dissolve his relationship with his so-called "girlfriend", who had become his bride three weeks prior to his touring America and meeting Pamela. Pamela announces to her exes that she is no longer available. Keith Moon is upset by this and invites her to The Record Plant. Ringo and John Lennon are present. She expresses pride at meeting "Beatle Number three", but John only plays with her name. It is interesting that the most important rock icon of all does not turn her on and vice versa.

Once back in London, Michael's wife, Wendy, reads about Pamela and her husband in the press. She calls Pamela to let her know that he married. She is sure that Michael loves her. She is sure he is not living with her, because she is calling him at different numbers all over London. Michael confesses to Pamela he was afraid to lose her and did not tell her the truth because of that fear. He spent seven years with Wendy and married her to try to save a relationship that was fizzling. After eleven weeks of back and forth conversation, he tells her he is leaving England to be with her.

In the meantime, Pamela passes the ultimate loyalty test when her friend Michele Overone calls to say that Larry Geller, who works for Elvis Presley, is looking for her. He wants her to come over as Elvis's date to watch "His king-size TV" with a bunch of friends. Pamela says "no" to the King: "I said no because I was in love with Michael Des Barres".

The chapter ends with Michael's return to Los Angeles. He arrives with only five dollars and a hair dryer, never to go back to Wendy. "He left everything behind", she notes.



Epilogue, Appendixes, P.S. and Various Untitled Add-ons

Epilogue, Appendixes, P.S. and Various Untitled Add-ons Summary and Analysis

Pamela marries Michael Des Barres four and a half years later, because it took that long to get his trans-Atlantic divorce. The two have a son together. In her final P. S. written after the second printing of the book, Pamela meets the "fourth" and final Beatle, Paul McCartney, and how hands him a copy of her book, completing a mission she set off to do forty years earlier.



Characters

Pamela Des Barres

Miss Des Barres wears her heart on her book sleeve as well as on every page. She is proud of her "groupie" conquests. However, her role as "the other woman" makes for an empathetic character. Being with so many men, famous or otherwise, has ups and downs. The downs are painful, and her diary depicts a soul in a state of continual wanting. The favors she provides are full of naïve love and expectation. She genuinely cares for and is in many ways addicted to the idea of being "with the band". Her need for "the conquest" is something she ascribes to Marty, one of her cheating boyfriends. It is hard to believe she does not realize she suffers from the same affliction. Because of the era in which these events took place, it's hard to categorize Miss Des Barres, or any groupie, as whorish, despite her behavior. Groupies are a new breed of fan who are free for the taking. They symbolize free love and the sexual revolution. As a GTO, Miss Des Barres has status among groupies. She enjoys sex, and, unlike most women, does not consider it a chore. However, like most women, she pours genuine affection into every conquest. She is as much heart and soul as she is body. The tears in her diary are real. She gives too much and receives little in return.

Her actions are carried out in the spirit of gratitude to artists who radiate from the stage. Her entire life is full of uncertainty and her need for physical contact, although poetically heartfelt, depicts loneliness. Her trysts with the famous involve a quest for real love. This is exemplified in the painstaking way she sews and embroiders shirts for Chris Hillman, Gram Parsons, and Jimmy Page. As the heroine of her tale, she certainly bypasses average fans that linger outside hotels and venues, and are satisfied to catch a mere glimpse of their idols.

The search for truth, peace, and love of the sixties permeates Pamela's thinking, but a lack of political focus makes her come across as insincere. Her fickleness makes her appear shallow. This trend-following kind of shallowness leads to the downfall of idealism which she and many baby boomers claimed to believe in. Her book sticks to "being with the band" and never delves into the events that made rock and roll performers symbols of cultural change. She does not touch upon JFK's assassination, nor does she connect the resurrective effect of The Beatles that followed. There is only a passing diary entry on Robert Kennedy. She never mentions Martin Luther King's murder, nor John Lennon's, whom she regards with unexplained disdain twice in her book. She protests against the closing of a Sunset Strip club, expressing pride to be a part of the movement, and speaks of the impending "revolution", but race riots, the Vietnam war, draft-dodging, Kent State—issues that make it into Billboard charts—do not make her diary. The prime moving elements, which give rise to the liberal atmosphere where Miss Des Barres sexually luxuriates, are ignored.

There is a brain under the sexual prowess and prettiness. Authoring this book establishes Miss Des Barres as articulate. Her diary demonstrates youthful writing talent



and paints a truth-seeking, introspective woman who speaks to God and wonders about the meaning of it all. Neglecting to include the giant issues of the day, such as soldiers dying needlessly, and blacks, women, and gays struggling for equality, subtracts from her character. She could have utilized her promiscuity in that sixties climate in stronger symbolic fashion. Instead, as sixties idealism fizzles and the seventies go nowhere, Miss Des Barres only emphasizes the "me" self-centeredness that killed the movement of the day.

Pamela's Mother and Father

Pamela's writing often flutters to her parents' reactions. In the face of her insatiable hunger for rock artists and hip ideology, her parents are clearly a strong base. They leave their indelible mark in the form of a conscience, values, and an awareness of God. This is evident in how Pamela ironically holds on to her virginity for as long as possible even while in the midst of unvirginal acts. In contrast to the other GTOs, she is relatively conservative in both appearance and level of drug-taking. Lady Schick and personal hygiene is approved by her dad early on. Unlike many of her peers, her middle class upbringing keeps her head on her shoulders. She thinks long and hard before smoking pot, and never allows herself to sink into drug abuse. She can't stand watching other GTOs shooting heroin.

Compared to the other outlandishly dressed and made up GTO members, she has a wholesome "pretty girl" look, trendy but not freakish. She does not condone the unmade up hippie "natural look", going so far as to call these types whose philosophies she adopts as "dirty". This is a dichotomy considering all the "dirty" deeds she performs on men. In spite of wanton ways, she remains middle of the road in ways that echo her Christian upbringing. At one point, she alludes to her parents who ask what she plans to do after high school. She would like to please them and is guilt-ridden over many "sins". In spite of claiming to be a part of the revolution, she never fights the social pressures to seek some sort of career, get married, and have babies.

One can say she takes after her father, an idealist dreamer of sorts, who seeks his fortune by going off to mine for a fortune in gold only to return empty-handed. At the start of her memoir, it is clear she looks to her father for guidance. She idolizes his "Clark Gable" looks and finds comfort in his protective arms. Her mother, from whom Pamela appears not to hide her sexual escapades, seems meek and not very authoritative. How many parents attend the burlesque-like performances of a daughter? She is more loving and understanding than reactive as she watches her daughter go from boyfriend to boyfriend, worried over her behavior but not seemingly advising her against pregnancy or venereal disease—issues which have been pitfalls of promiscuity since the beginning of time. Her mother appears kind, understanding, and nonjudgmental. At one point she assures her daughter that she will "not go to hell."



Jimmy Page and Led Zeppelin

Jimmy Page is considered one of rock and roll's greatest lead guitarists. He replaced Eric Clapton in the Yardbirds and later went on to form Led Zeppelin with Robert Plant, John Paul Jones, and John Bonham. The band is credited with creating heavy metal; however, their accomplishments incorporated a mix of classical music into blues in ways that reached psychedelic realms. Led Zeppelin had an almost regal presence on stage. They were rumored to delve into the occult, which is substantiated by Jimmy's request that Pamela find him Aleister Crowley paraphernalia. He was also said to have sadistic tendencies. According to Pamela, he kept whips in his suitcase, promising never to use them on her. Although described as beautiful and somewhat narcissistic by Pamela, Robert Plant, the lead singer, was the Adonis of the band.

Bob Martene

Bob Martene is Pamela's first boyfriend, whom she meets at a dance. He has moved to Los Angeles from New York and is very much an impressive fifties style leather clad rebel. He curses, fights, smokes, and claims to have gone all the way many times already. He lets Pamela keep her virginity, while teaching her sexual positions in the back of a car. He is forced to return to New York with his parents. The two write to one another, swearing eternal love. After The Beatles change the world, Bob no longer satisfies Pamela's idea of hipness. She tries to get back with him but it doesn't work. However, all the sexual play they experimented with whets her appetite, and her experience becomes a talent that pays off with each new boy she makes love to.

Beatle Sweeties

Pamela refers to the friends who like the Beatles as Beatle sweeties. They tend to run in packs of four. Each one likes one of the respective Beatles. She and they try to sneak into the Beatles compound in Bel Air after their first Hollywood Bowl concert. The mission is unaccomplished. Eventually her Beatles friends accuse her of betrayal when Pamela starts liking the dirty Rolling Stones.

Frank Zappa

Frank Zappa is the leader of a group known as the Mothers of Invention. His was not a typical rock and roll group. Long hair was involved, along with experimental array of music that ranged from classical to pop to rock and roll. He becomes interested in forming an all-girl group after Pamela and her groupie friends show up at his place wearing the same outrageous outfit. He calls them the GTOs.



The GTOs

The GTOs, or Girls Together Only or Outrageously or anything with an "O". Originally there are five girls, including Miss Pamela, Miss Sparky, Miss Lucy, Miss Christine, and Miss Sandra. Two others, Miss Mercy and Miss Cynderella are soon added. The title of "Miss" was coined by Tiny Tim, who addressed all females as "Miss" followed by their first name. They are all groupies and Sunset Strip regulars. Each forms liaisons with various rock artists. They are written up in Rolling Stone as well as other publications in their day.

Chris Hillman

Chris Hillman is the bass player for The Byrds, a famous and influential though short-lived group who blended folk and rock music. He later forms several other bands, one of which is the Flying Burrito Brothers, who fuse rock and country. Pamela becomes infatuated with Chris at age sixteen and proceeds to follow him at every stage of his early career in ways that today would categorize her as a stalker. He sees her as a child until she comes of age and becomes a GTO. He has several wives and Pamela fantasizes becoming one of them. He eventually has an affair with Pamela and then marries someone else. They have a lifelong friendship. At one point Pamela hand-sews and embroiders him a cowboy shirt, which he loses in a gamble.

Noel Redding

Noel Redding is a very inconsequential bass player, who gains fame backing up Jimi Hendrix. Pamela passes up Jimi Hendrix for Noel's British accent and curly hair.

Mick Jagger

Mick Jagger is quite the down to earth human being and regular horny guy around Pamela as he woos her. She captures his big lips, rooster machinations, and smiling charm on paper in her many rendezvous with him. He is Pamela's sexual fantasy come true. Unfortunately, he too only considers Pamela a play thing.

Don Johnson

The reader is introduced to the young actor as he struggles to get roles. When Pamela meets him, his name is Donny Wayne Johnson. He is not at all likeable. His self-centered conceit is hard to take even after he becomes Pamela's live-in boyfriend. His temper is fearsome to read about. It is hard to believe he thinks it will be all right with Pamela for him to have a prepubescent teen on the side. He is rude, controlling, and abusive.



Michael Des Barres

Michael Des Barres, who ultimately becomes Pamela's true love and knight in shining armor, was the lead singer for one of the first "glam rock" bands known as Silverhead. He is a titled "Marquis". It took over four years for him to get a trans-Atlantic divorce with the woman for whom he left Pamela. He left everything behind in order to be with Pamela. The band was not very successful in the United States, but was big in England. He is also an actor who appeared in several movies, including the one on which he met Pamela in, as well as television series, including McGiver. The couple had a son. They are no longer married, but continue as friends after a relatively long marriage.

Victor Haydon

Introduced Pamela to Captain Beefheart and the hip scene on the Sunset Strip.



Objects/Places

Groups

Now they are referred to as rock bands. In the early sixties, one would ask one's friends who one's favorite "group" was.

Groupies

Those who pursue groups.

Rock and roll records

In the sixties, teens listened to and collected 45 RPM records. As the music progressed from rock and roll to "rock", LPs or albums became big sellers.

The Sunset Strip

Where Pamela hung out in rock clubs.

Hotels

Where groupies did their thing with the likes of Jagger and Page.

The Hollywood Bowl

A concert venue in Los Angeles.

Cowboy shirts

Pamela hand sews and embroiders these for her rock and roll lovers.

Bass guitars

Pamela has a preference for bass players Paul McCartney and Chris Hillman.

Turquoise necklace

Jimmy Page gives Pamela a turquoise necklace.



England

Where all those guitarists with British accents come from.

Danceland

A place where Pamela works dancing for eight cents a dance with lonely men.



Themes

Hipness and Rebellion

Elvis opened the door to rebellion in the fifties, but the Beatles kicked it in. Long hair on boys became a controversial issue. Once youth saw the big issue adults made over long haired guys, it brought to light other injustices. Judging someone's hair length was as ridiculous as judging skin color. From the onset, Pamela is not a conformist. Although she doesn't participate in many civil causes, she knows she is a part of something big. Rock and Roll is her vehicle into the world of contradiction. Fifties movies and music already walked the walk and talked the talk, and from an early age she is pulled in by defiant icons like James Dean.

Although most of her generation faces the same influences, she is several steps ahead of her high school peers. When she meets Victor Hayden, she gets a passport into the world of hipness. Her friends are artists and "freaks". She loves the way they think, dress, and act. She loves being a part of an outrageous scene that shocks traditionalists. Being hip is her priority. Hipness at that point in time is not just trend and fashion, although it dissipates into those things. "Hipness" involved an awareness that the older generation did not have. It followed a political, philosophical, and social code that came natural to all who saw the light. Sixties hipness was cool, but cannot be equated to the so-called "coolness" of today. It was more than a casual attitude toward everything. It was a lifestyle with greater depth that branched out to communal living, environmental respect, spiritual awakening, women's rights, gay rights, and racial equality—matters which touch today's headlines. The hipness that happened in the sixties incorporated activism that echoes into today. No revolution happened, but the youth rebellion of the sixties did change the world in many attitudes that entered mainstream society and whose affects are visible today. It wasn't only "hippies" who saw the light. Indeed, the leaders of that lantern were the beat poets and artists of the fifties.

Today, one hears conservatives as well as liberals incorporating the concept of "cool." At one point in the book, Pamela talks about that "sixties knowing look" that the hip kids exchanged. Hipness in the sixties was the antidote to the poisoned establishment. It held an identity recognizably distinct from the so-called "silent majority" of the time. It separated those who opposed the Vietnam War from those who supported it. Sixties "hipness" identified counter cultural thoughts from traditional one.

The Purpose of it All

As carnally obsessed as she is, Pamela is spiritually oriented. Often, her diary speaks directly to God. In many ways she personifies the universal love of the sixties flower child. Her LSD experience entries speaks of the soul's eternity. She feels herself as part of an important change that is taking place in the world. Every action is symbolic even if she is not participating in specific causes. She sees goodness in her friends, and rarely



says anything negative about anyone. She is such a people person that she is accepted quickly and easily by most everyone she meets. Most women tend to be reserved around one another, but it is easy for her to make friends and find roommates to share apartments with.

Although early entries have a prepubescent tone, her ability to feel so much love for so many at a time makes her almost spiritually evolved. She not only often stops to wonder what will become of her life, but ponders the greater purpose of it all. She sees beauty in everything and can appreciate girls as much as boys as captured in her many poetic descriptions of lovers and friends. While others consume their sorrows in pills and heroin, her journal indicates wonder and appreciation for being alive. As a part of her generation, she reports on many mind expanding and transcendental exercises and activities. The impression that these matters consume her thoughts and become offshoots to her love life indicate she is not just following trends that come along.

She is without question fragile in her inability to separate sexual lust from true love. The way she pins hopes on each lover who lets her down makes her fragile. Yet her rebounding nature overcomes that fragility, and the only time she falls to pieces is when Jimmy breaks her heart, and when she turns down Mick Jagger after having lusted so strongly after him.

At first this is her effort to be true to Jimmy Page. Later, when Page spurns her, she is in so much pain she passes up Mick's summon. Time heals the Jimmy Page scab and she is perfectly able to be on Mick Jagger's arm.

Sex, Love and Confusion

From Pamela's teeny bopper adulation of Dion to her sensual awakening with Paul McCartney to her ultimate groupie experiences with Mick Jagger, love is the heart of this book. Pamela loves musicians intensely and completely. She never exactly explains why they do more for her than jocks or firemen, who possess the same anatomy. It may have to do with the music they make, or the sexual freedoms rock and roll and its lyrics ignite.

Love for Pamela is a physical thing, but she soon discovers that her heart and mind are affected beyond the sexual moment. Touch is a passing pleasure to her lovers, but to her it is everything. She needs constant reassurance and contact in the face of the coldness that follows a night of lovemaking. It is difficult for her not to get emotionally attached to her lovers. Her generosity affects her partners only temporarily. There are Pamelas on the road at every tour stop. For them she is clearly an out of sight out of mind matter.

However, in spite of her emotional attachment, Miss Pamela has the ability to juggle her crushes. She has it bad for Jimmy Page, but if Chris Hillman is present, she goes crazy over him, worshipping every skin cell though he ignores her. She is able to appreciate attributes in each. When she is not with Chris Hillman, or Mick Jagger, or Keith Moon,

she finds solace in the arms of actors, such as Don Johnson or Lane Caudell. In this sense, she brings true meaning to the Crosby Stills and Nash lyric, "If you can't be with the one you love, love the one you're with". For most, love is fulfilled by the person one is in love with. Pamela's fickle personality makes it hard to understand how she is can really be "in love" with any one person. Her rebounding nature overcomes an awful lot of hurt.

Style

Perspective

Miss Des Barres describes her life in the first person, using diaries of her youth. Her memories are prompted into great detail by her journals, which serve to jar the memories of fellow boomers who read her story. This is an interesting and useful format in that we watch Miss Des Barres' teen thought processes. Those who lived through that unusual time period see themselves in many ways. Rock and roll and the way the British invasion saturated American teen lives is captured. Many of Miss Des Barres' generation dreamed of being with McCartney, Jagger, Page, or Plant, and only a handful got to be flies on the walls in the manner that she did. Those interested in her book watch her mature and develop as time passes. It is easy to see why both males and females found her attractive. She has a sunshiney, honest approach to life. Her perspective is that of an innocent girl caught up in a whirlwind obsession that she cannot let go of. This childlike perspective is what keeps boomers young in their attitudes. However, Miss Des Barres book is limited in that there was so much going on at the time that could have been alluded to in passing. Campus unrest, the Vietnam War, and racial tension are not in her attention span or window of awareness to the extent that they were for so many of her peers. This poses a contradiction of worldliness and naiveté in how she recounts her story.

Tone

Miss Des Barres tone is always upbeat, and although she conveys pain over how her famous lovers treat her, there is humor sprinkled throughout her account. Like her constant smile, she steers away from depressing friendships. She is optimistic and expresses joy at being alive. Her fickle nature takes her where the wind blows and she admits it. One lover knocks her down, but she rises with another until the pill of new unrequited love is again forced down her throat. There are many tears in many entries, which she describes with ironic wit and dry observation. From the onset, this book points to triumph in that she is not merely listing sexual conquests for public reading. Each diary entry is a climb up a mountain whose pinnacle is never in clear view. Every step of the way, her knight in shining armor appears to elude her, until suddenly he materializes in the person of Michael Des Barres. Her story and the tone she conveys has a purpose. Her quest is vindicated. In spite of her "ditsy" activities, level-headedness comes across in most scenarios. Drugs are used as temporary escapes in spite of the heartbreak her lovers inflict. Her head always clears and she sees the light, never fully relying on substances or considering suicide or "hard" drugs as many of her friends do.



Structure

Using her diary/journal as her backbone or spinal column of her story serves not only a great outline for her book, but as a catalyst that measures her personal growth entry by entry. She also incorporates photographs capturing innocent days all the way up to womanhood. These not only substantiate her experiences, one is left wishing she had included many more. However, although she amplifies extensively, she does not go outside of her immediate experience or comfort zone. One never really knows her opinion on Vietnam, racism, or women's rights, although her lifestyle points to the radical left.

She also leaves out matters which would interest readers of this topic unexplained. In particular, she makes two references to John Lennon which sound contemptuous. When speaking of John, she gives the impression that there is more to be told, but is best not told. There is no doubt she reveres The Beatles, but as her story telling travels the time line, she never mentions how John Lennon's murder, that which struck millions of her peers as a tragedy, affected her.

In the reprinted version, she adds several "P.S.s" epilogues. The Beatles, who were the instigators of her groupie obsession, serve as a framework which she completes in this version after meeting Paul McCartney. In the body of the book, she meets the other three Beatles. In her add-on epilogues, she describes the flurry of atmosphere created upon meeting Paul, who asks "if they ever?" as she hands him a copy. Although she never slept with any of the Beatles, it is clear that meeting the fourth member of the Beatles is a full-circle moment. She has touched the highest realm in the rock group world. Meeting four Beatles, although it took decades to accomplish, is something she can fan in the face of her Beatles buddies, who once accused her of disloyalty forty years later.



Quotes

"I began to associate the Top 10 with events and boys of the moment. My transistor became an appendage," p. 16

"Victor began to hang around me during Nutrition, blowing my innocent mind with radical departures from the truth as I knew it." p. 35

"You, too, can make people think you are a disgusting weirdo, and create havoc by just walking down the street!!" p. 37

"I gazed at Sonny and Cher, arms wrapped around each other, wearing matching polka-dot bell-bottoms and fake fur vests, and realized we were all one perfect hip force with one big huge beating heart." p. 44

"n bestowed upon me by one of these amazing creatures." p. 44

"I made a bunch of new girlfriends by just gliding down the Strip, smiling overtly at all passersby, most of whom would smile back at me with the knowing "sixties" look. Some would walk with me down the crowded boulevard, spewing their newfound wisdom into my newly opened ears, and I would expound to them and we would nod in perfect agreement. It was such a relief to know you weren't alone with those humongous unprecedented ideas." p. 55

"I showed my affection for the opposite sex in those days by giving them head, and I was very popular indeed. I tried not to think of myself as being cheap or easy or any of those other terms that were used to describe loose, free, peace-loving girls; . . ." p. 57

"When it came right down to it, rock and roll groups were my life." p. 63

"New girls were just as exciting to me as new boys (well, almost), so I approached this adorable big-eyed girl with high hopes and asked her to dance with me to the brand-new Butterfly song, which I thought was called "In the Garden of Eden," but which was really "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida." p.76

"Jimi Hendrix was a formidable looking gentleman. He had a big psychedelic glaring eyeball on his wacky jacket and his hair kinked out blatantly in every direction. I could smell sex all over him; even in his pockmarks sizzled. He was black and I was extremely pink (or was it yellow?) and not ready for an encounter with this formidable man on fire." p. 82

"Before I know it, I'll be a complete adult. I never liked that word, so maybe I'll never consider myself and adult . . . per say . . . and I must always remember:

Don't count the stars
Or you'll stumble
If someone drops a star



Down you tumble

Still desperate to be famous, I scoured the town for an agent, any agent who could get me in the right elevators." p. 84

"I've got to hand it to myself, though; I waded through those feelings of complete and utter inadequacy and gritted my teeth, waiting for the most celebrated celebrity in the room to bust my butt and tell me I was out of my element: "Go back to Reseda, NOW!!" But it never happened and slowly my fraudulent composure started breathing by itself. I acted "as if," until I was." p. 90

"I had come up against insistent men before, but my desire to remain uninvaded always won out and I was able to delight them in many other ways." p. 93

"I am so confused with my life. Where am I? In between a girl and a boy, in between sane and insane. I scare, offend, shock and dismay most everyone living, but Spark says you can't live to please others, and I know that's right. I'm so rude to the "other breed," but they have a right to their perversions, as do we. How can I become enlightened? I don't want to remain on this level. I'd like to meet Bob Dylan or John Lennon or some other prophet I really admire, and have a conversation." p. 98

"You will be, we'll be together for a long long time if you want it that way. I've known you for a thousand years, don't you feel that way?' Yes yes yes, Mr. Page. We tried to sleep but woke up every ten minutes and kissed. Every time he touched me he would moan and sigh and call to God. Such a face, so gentle and soft, I'm amazed at his sadistic tendencies; . . . Every time I feel doubtful (which is constantly) I look at this ring and all I can see is his perfect face." p. 156



Topics for Discussion

What is your opinion of Miss Pamela as a person? Is she an air-head? Just a bad girl? Or is there depth to her?

Would you say the author is very much a product of the sixties? Do her activities have relevance today?

Is Miss Des Barres a symbol of the sexual revolution that took place, or is she just a harlot that can be at home in any century or decade?

She does not call herself a hippie. But she adopts and agrees with the hippie philosophy. What defused all the hippie idealism Pamela Des Barres alludes to throughout the book?

Miss Des Barres only touches upon participating in one peace march, yet she feels herself to be a part of a movement that will change the world. She also participates in a "sit in" in Sunset Boulevard. Do you consider her a conscious activist or a shallow follower?

Do you see Miss Des Barres sexually generous ways as another way of seeking true love?

How is Pamela similar to the average woman?

What is your opinion of the GTOs?

Pamela always falls in love hard. Do you think any of her famous boyfriends, such as Jimmy Page and Mick Jagger, loved and appreciated her at any point in return?

Do you think she provides a good or necessary service for all those troubadours so far away from home?