

Abstract

The thesis aims to explore the artistic personality of Hunter S. Thompson, one of the most distinctive cultural figures of post-war America, and his genesis as an author, journalist, and a counterculture idol of the 1960s. The era is now widely regarded as a turning point in contemporary American history as its deep-rooted values and norms were, over the course of a decade, gradually transformed by the young generation of social and political activists toward allegedly a more tolerant and liberal kind of community. Crucial in such an endeavor was the role of the countercultural movement that produced some of the most capable intellectual minds of the time, including Thompson. The paper thus analyzes the role and nature of the alternative culture in America as perceived by one of its most observant participants. Also, the thesis focuses on the author's role in establishing a new genre called New Journalism which can be linked with the era's countercultural efforts as well. In general, Thompson, in his texts, examines various phenomena surrounding the counterculture and provides us with a distinctive portrayal of the era's zeitgeist. However, unlike some of his contemporaries, he also remembers to examine numerous flaws and fallacies existing within contemporary American society, the American Dream idea being the most striking one. Therefore, in order to explore the issue in its entirety, the paper also includes a comparison of Thompson's texts dealing with the counterculture with selected works of such contemporary authors who were not its direct participants but who are widely known to take a specific stand on the problem – among these are Thomas Pynchon, Tom Robbins, and Don DeLillo.