

The Idaho Evening Statesman

Boise, Idaho, Saturday, December 5, 1959

Rock-Roll Fad Fades

One of the most significant results of the continuing disk jockey scandals is the demise of rock and roll. Although the entire credit cannot be given to revelations of payoffs to sponsors of junk which had no chance otherwise, public disgust at the methods of promoting primitive noises on records has hastened the decline of this fad.

Surveys of record companies, movie makers and distributors and promoters of both mediums taken after the payola investigations began have been unanimous in their conclusions that gyrating dancers and shimmering guitar players are on the decline. It is a decline which began early in the year, as evidenced by scanning lists of the 10 top tunes at various periods in the year.

In January, rock and roll was at the peak of its popularity, and it was rare that any song not possessing the frantic beat managed to survive, let alone reach the top 10.

By July, three non-rock tunes had managed to make the list. Recent checks show only three rock and roll tunes among the top 10. Nor is it likely there will be a revival, despite the approaching reappearance on the scene of the most publicized hip-swayer of them all. Rock and roll is but another musical experience, fading into the oblivion from whence it came.

There are few mourners. Many, like the musician who is head of Columbia Records popular recording department, Mitch Miller, are openly rejoicing. Long an opponent of the style, Miller's comment on its decline was, "I refused to make that trash."

To the cynical mind, accustomed to one musical fad giving way to another more extreme, it is soothing to note the replacement for rock and roll has been the ballad. The rapid rise of the latter is nowhere better dramatized than in the replacement of rock and roll's champion, Alan Freed, with a baritone who sings the type of songs popular in the 1930s and 1940s.

Looking back on it now, it is easy to see why the bubble burst. But there was a time when music lovers didn't think they would survive the noise. Peace and quiet—it's wonderful.