

Greg Mills can also be read at [The Bastard of Art and Commerce](#).



A grey and bent Eric Burdon is alternately spewing misty-eyed nostalgia and begging the aging boomers of Marin County for money. It's pledge time on KQED! PBS' most bloated affiliate is once again shaking the cages for that sweet boomer buckage.

The lead Animal is in town for the twice-yearly decrepit hippy begathon, hosting a hideous showcase of c-list sixties bands who have taken time out from touring the county-fair-and-corporate-picnic circuit to prop up the stuffed corpses of cheap drugs, VD and vague providential missions in front of the cameras one more time.

Man oh man, tell me one more time how your generation all managed to attend the best concert of all time in upstate New York, while simultaneously serving in and protesting against an unjust Southeast Asian war, all at the same time. You guys did everything together! The logistics must have been insane! Now, me and my scummy coevals are allowed the privilege of watching your sub-icons strap on their trusses, wheeze out their battle-cries-of-a-generation and their righteous Soul jams (this is a new sop thrown to the youngsters who came of age in early '70s) and shake their guts like Topol.

Herman and the Hermits! Damn, where's my checkbook?

## PBS Don't Want My Money

Written by Greg Mills

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And we've have been hammered by this sixties nostalgia since the eighties!! We have had twenty years of KQED wheeling these acid causalities out (with a slight interregnum under the Three Tenors regime in the nineties).

Not only is there no – as in “no” – relevance in any of this programming to people my age, it actually steals from the KQED of the future. For as KQED is narrowcasting to a class of people who are, even as we speak, starting to feel the icy hand of the Black Angel. Conflagrate sage all you want, starchildren -- the Angel comes for you, and the KQED sticker on your Volvo is no Passover talisman. And dead people aren't generally too forthcoming with the ducats.

Now, this is occasional relief from the boils of the summer of love, though I would argue the cure is worse than the disease. Ladies and gentlemen, I give you....John Motherscatching Tesh. John Tesh. JOHN TESH??? Who makes these programming decisions? Is it the same guy who assured ATT that Carrot Top was a spokesman with moxie?

John Tesh is an anomaly. He is a popular artist that has no actual demographic. Of if he has a demographic, it's a group of people, who, like say Hell's Angels or the Mennonites, you have heard about and guess they exist, and you'd be damn tempted to take a picture if you did see one. There is no Venn diagram that could include John Tesh's demographic.

They are a singularity. They cannot be experienced through direct observation, only through statistical analysis. And KQED really wants their money.

I write this now as a grudgingly settled thirty-five year old, with a house, two little kids and a happening wife. I've lived in the Bay Area all my life. I've got a job, some walking around money, I watched Sesame Street when I was three and I watch now (unwillingly), all on KQED. And yet I do not feel compelled to give those weasels one red cent, even if that means that I will never experience that rare frisson of plastering a KQED sticker to my Element. (Next to the Apple sticker.) So what's wrong with my money? What about my goddamn upper-middle class nostalgia?

I suspect that KQED would point (lamely) at some poignant documentary about Queer teens or something as “contemporary”, “fresh” and “having somewhat to do with life in this century”. They do occasionally manage a decent documentary (the nationally syndicated PBS programs are for the most part excellent), but usually it's some pandering thought piece for aging liberals.

(And I do watch the Rick Steves in Europe stuff, because I have a suspicion that Rick Steves is secretly a dope fiend, a theory that makes watching the program a much richer experience. He really is that excited about visiting a Belgian lace factory. )

So, again, as my generation emerges from behind the 7-11 to raise kids, hold jobs, start the companies that drive the Bay Area economy, we ask one thing of you KQED: make some effort to be relevant to us, the living. And I'm sure we'd open our checkbooks. I'm just saying.

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