

Taking my girls to the Pediatrician reminds of the time I went to see Jimi Hendrix. I know you think I'm crazy, but stay with me here and I'll explain myself.

It was the sixties. A great time to be a teenager and a horrible time to be a teenager's parent. We were slamming the door on the Leave-It-To-Beaver mindset of the fifties. And nobody did the sixties like Andy Smith.

I had my brown hippie hat with beads and feathers, paisley shirts with the sleeves that puffed out, bell-bottom jeans with the peace symbol on the thigh, leather vest and my trend-setting black and white saddle oxford shoes. I was a flower child, possibly the coolest dude ever.

My buddies and I would spend many a Saturday night going to concerts. We saw all the big ones of that era. Joplin, Donovan, The Chamber Brothers, Fish, Cream, and of course my heroes, The Beach Boys. But the greatest concert of them all was the night we went to see Jimi Hendrix. It was also the worst.

We got there early so we could take in all the excitement. The stadium was packed with psychedelic people who were almost as cool looking as me. Actually, I never could make up my mind if I wanted to be a surfer beach bum or psychedelic hippie during that time in my life, but that's another story I hopefully will never pursue. Tickets were hard to come by, so we felt lucky to have this opportunity to see the greatest guitar player in rock 'n roll history.

The first band was okay, but everyone was there to see Hendrix. It seemed like an eternity of some guy coming out every few minutes to tell us that Hendrix was a bit delayed, but would be here soon. The papers the next day said he was two hours late. As a teenager in the crowded stands, I'd say it was at least a month. We are talking about thirty thousand plus teenagers who had no concept of patience who by now were so wasted on pot, booze and God knows what else that we were well entertained by the pockets of fights and riots going on here and there.

Then the moment we had been literally fighting for occurred. I'm not sure if I was excited more to see Hendrix as I was that I wasn't killed in the process of waiting. But this was Hendrix after all. As we stumbled to our seats, or some proximity to that, Hendrix pulled into the stadium in his Limousine and made his way to the stage.

The first song was great. What this guy could do with a guitar was well worth waiting to see. Then he played Purple Haze. Simply put, watching Jimi Hendrix play Purple Haze live is one of the greatest experiences you will ever have in rock 'n roll history. It's one of those classic moments that I still brag about today.

After Purple Haze, Hendrix thanked everybody and stumbled off the stage and into his Limousine. He was off into the sunset before any of us had a chance to come down from our buzz long enough to realize he had just played two songs and left.

My friends and I got out of there quick, as near riot conditions began to emerge from the crowd that had felt they had been short-changed.

I had mix emotions. On the one hand, I felt cheated as I spent a lot of money only to hear this guy play two songs. On the other hand, it was money well spent to have the opportunity to hear Jimi Hendrix play Purple Haze live – and it was the 30 minute version, to be fair.

And that's exactly how I feel every time I take one of my daughters to the Pediatrician.

No matter how early you might get there, you will always end up waiting well beyond your appointed time. I'm ready to explode every time they call someone else's name. It's bad enough to wait, but when you're sitting there with your child who is feeling miserable, the time comes to a painful crawl.

When they finally do call you in, you find that the actual time the doctor spends with your daughter is about ten minutes, tops.

I always leave the place with those mixed emotions. On the one hand, I am frustrated at having to take a day off from work to sit there waiting for a doctor who will only spend a few minutes with my sick daughter. On the other hand, I am grateful that the doctor knew what was wrong with my girl and we can now get her back on the road towards being that bundle of chaotic energy we've come to love.

For some parents, the adventures of taking their children to the Pediatrician is an episode of anxious homicidal contemplation. But I don't let it get under my skin too much. I had excellent training for fatherhood when I was a surfer dude, flower-powered hippie in the sixties. I can handle this.

Just A Thought