

"...the Drug Revolution has combined with the Sexual Revolution to bring forth amazing progeny. Chiefly, what has happened... can be described—paradoxically—as an upsurge of interest in the nonphysical side of sex. ...The mysterious nonphysical part of sexuality is variously known as 'mind,' 'spirit,' or 'emotion.'" – Robert Anton Wilson

WHEN we first invited comment on the topic of this special issue, we heard from one MAPS member who asked: "*Why, for heaven's sake, Sex? ...I do not think this is a good idea. A special issue just on spirituality and psychedelics can be rich enough. I have nothing against sex—believe me—but I would leave it elsewhere.*"

We were a bit surprised by this attitude. Is the topic of sex taboo? Does it make people shyly smile? Should it be avoided, from fear of being seen as "sensationalistic?" (We have to wonder why it is all right for prime-time American TV to broadcast numerous shows that depict violence and hate, but showing the act of physical love is seen as a bad thing.)

Indeed, an issue on just spirituality and psychedelics could be rich enough. And, as we quickly learned from the influx of material, an issue on just sex and psychedelics could also be rich enough. But there is a clear connection here, that stems from our original theme issue on "creativity."

For many, the primary creative function of "spirit" is humanity—God created man in his own image. And while God may have pulled a rabbit out of a hat, the human echo of this act is when the rabbit has died. It's an easy argument that the most primary creative function of humans is to make other humans. Sex makes us like gods, in our ability to create. But what does it all have to do with psychedelics?

Just as psychedelics can allow one to experience a "oneness with God," so too sex can evoke a similar oneness. Bodies meld and barriers are crossed in emotional, physical, and spiritual ways. And when a child is born, it is a creative manifestation of this oneness.

The cabalistic symbol for spirit trapped in matter is a circle within a square. Strikingly, this symbol has emerged in contemporary form through the packaging of condoms—the hint of the circular rubber showing through the square foil package. Indeed, when a child isn't conceived, it could well be because of spirit trapped in matter!

Some folks in the "drug community," such as the MAPS member quoted above, don't seem to be comfortable with a forum that discusses drugs and sex. Interestingly, we found while doing research on spiritual approaches towards sexuality, that some in the "Tantra community" are conversely uncomfortable discussing sex and drugs. Many of these folks do incorporate drug use into their sexual practices. However, they feel as though public acknowledgment or advocacy of drug use may bring additional unwelcome attention to a group of people that "straight society" already sometimes has problems accepting. Charles Hayes' recent book *Tripping*, contains an interview with Terence McKenna, wherein Terence summed up the connection quite well:

"The French term for orgasm as a little death [petite mort] is an acknowledgment that orgasm is boundary-dissolving. In that sense, sex is the drug that most people are able to access. There's a wonderful saying in Italian: 'Bed is the poor man's opera.' Most people arrange their lives so they can have sex, so they can have this incredibly fleeting, brief moment when it all falls away. Drugs do this same thing and for longer periods, so they gather to themselves the same attitudes and anxieties that surround sex."

Humankind has long been searching for the ultimate aphrodisiac. Psychedelics have been touted as "love tonics," and in some cases this love is expressed in the physical realm of sexuality. These substances have also been useful tools for people on a spiritual path. Sex, spirit, and psychedelics certainly aren't strangers; anecdotes of one viewing his or her partner as Goddess or God during sex while high on psychedelics have commonly been reported.

Some may see an issue of the *MAPS Bulletin* devoted solely to "spirit" as being too dry. Others may see an issue devoted solely to "sex" as being too racy. But in combining the two clearly related topics, our hope is that we have provided enough variety for everyone. •



MAPS Bulletin "Sex, Spirit, and Psychedelics" Editors: **Sylvia** Thyssen and **Jon** Hanna