



MAPS

BULLETIN OF THE MULTIDISCIPLINARY ASSOCIATION FOR PSYCHEDELIC STUDIES

Baby Steps



EDEN CHASE DOBLIN, MY FIRST CHILD, was born on December 12, 1994. Eden's name is meant to remind us that our challenge is to live in a state of joy and delight, while also en-

gaging in a struggle (chase) to recreate Eden here on earth. ■ Eden has turned our family life utterly upside down, constantly tugging at our hearts with his joyous smile, perplexed and quizzical look, and poignant cry. My wife, Lynne, took maternity leave for four months, then returned to work. Then I became Mr. Mom, foolishly assuming I could work as before with just a few touching interludes for diaper changes and feeding while Eden amused himself alongside me in the MAPS office. I was just as vulnerable to the myth of Supermom as many others. I thought I could work on MAPS, take care of a baby, make progress on my dissertation and have time for a relationship with my wife all at the same time. Now I know better. Sometimes it seemed that Eden was more of an obstacle to my work than the War on Drugs. We finally decided to get help in the form of part-time child care. We now seem to have a workable balance as evidenced by this latest, bigger-than-ever MAPS newsletter, thanks in no small part to the skills of Sylvia Thyssen who still manages to get a lot done with Eden crawling around her feet. ■ At a recent conference, I spoke with a genuinely idealistic DEA official who believes in the value of his work. He suggested that my new status as a parent might change my attitude toward drug policy, making me more sympathetic to the need for drug prohibition to protect children. I've given his suggestion much thought. When I see Eden look up at me, vulnerable and drug abuse. However, I also want to protect him from misinformation that exaggerates the risks of drug use (for example, the recent media coverage of MDMA neurotoxicity research, p. 8). I'd prefer he lived in a society that possible medicinal benefits of marijuana (p. 33), hinder the establishment of legal contexts for the spiritual use of psychedelics (pp. 35 and 39), or create the climate of violence and fear characteristic of the War on Drugs. As food for thought about alternative approaches, this issue contains an article that discusses the supervised use of psychedelics in rites-of-passage for adolescents (p. 41), a feature of every society that has successfully integrated the use of drugs into its culture. ■ This issue reports on most of the psychedelic research projects in humans currently underway around the world, including studies of MDMA, ibogaine, psilocybin, DMT, ketamine and LSD. Of special note is the last in a multi-year series of articles about Dr. Rick Strassman's psilocybin and DMT research (pp. 16, 17, and 23). Dr. Strassman has moved to Canada, where psychedelic research is not yet permitted. His pioneering work will be sorely missed. ■ Evidence demonstrating that psychedelics can be used safely in research continues to accumulate, laying the foundation for further studies into therapeutic uses. Given the lack of financial support from the government or the pharmaceutical industry for research into the beneficial uses of psychedelics or marijuana, the efforts of private citizens are all the more important. This issue contains the reports of two organizations, the Albert Hofmann Foundation (p. 45) and the Heffter Research Institute (p. 49), that are working along with MAPS to find support for preserving the psychedelic research of the past and catalyzing the psychedelic research of the future. The first collaborative project of all three organizations is to create a psychedelic research bibliography on the Internet (p. 52). MAPS' annual financial report is included in this issue for your review (p. 60). ■ Out of our collective vision emerges a fledgling scientific renaissance. ■ Rick Doblin, MAPS President, September 1995. ■

