

the literature of psychedelics

Bob Wallace

WELCOME to this new column about available (and forthcoming) books on the topic of "mind-expanding" plants and

compounds. We expect this will be a regular column. I'll generally cover both new books from many disciplines, and each time discuss some of the classics in particular fields. But in this first column I'll just cover some of the new books from 1995 and 1996. Future columns will also discuss classics from fields such as psychology, philosophy, history, religion, ethnobotany, neuropharmacology, and organic chemistry.

What's New

Flowers of Wiricuta: A Gringo's Journey To Shamanic Power by Tom Soloway Pinkson is a true story of the author's work with the Huichols and about his personal spiritual and shamanic development. Tom gives us many insights into Peyote, prayer, pilgrimage, and power. Chapters include Healing the Sacred Circle, Befriending the Darkness, Responsible Ecstasy, Sacred Marriage, and Today's Hunter: The Spiritual Warrior. (1995; Wakan Press 0-9647542-0-7 \$14.95).

Strange Fruit: Alchemy and Religion, the Hidden Truth by Clark Heinrich presents the *Amanita* mushroom as the philosopher's stone and the body of Christ. It traces a path from Vedic and Tantric myths, through Moses and the prophets, to the quest for the Holy Grail and the alchemists, ending with the author's personal experiences with the *Amanita*. Poetic and outrageous. Many color photos. (1995; Bloomsbury [London] 0-7475-1548-4, 236 pages, \$44.95*).

Religion and Psychoactive Sacraments: a Bibliographic Guide by Thomas B. Roberts provides a great reference to many books and papers on entheogens (psychedelics used in a religious context) and related topics. Includes extended excerpts plus bibliographic data; about one page per book. A must for research into the spiritual side of these compounds. (1995; Council on Spiritual Practices, 329 pages, \$29.95).

Three Halves of Ino Moxo was written by noted Peruvian author Cesar Calvo in 1981, but was recently translated into English by Kenneth A. Symington. It evokes the images and feelings of the *ayahuasca* jungle; colorful, dark, intense. High quality literature, translated by one who knows these realms well. Lyrical, mythical, the story of Calvo's search for Cordova-Rios, now Ino Moxo, and the three *ayahuascaros* who help him. Brings forth the worlds and realities of the plant sorcerers. Photos and glossary. (1995; Inner Traditions 0-89281-519-1, 271 pages, \$14.95).

PharmakoPoeia: Plant Powers, Poisons, and Herbcraft by Dale Pendell features a range of scientific and practical information, plus some lovely poetry about psychedelic and other psychoactive plants. Topics include entheogens as personal allies, feeling comfortable with natural poisons, and useful tips on psychotropic plants as house guests. Beautiful stuff. This Volume I includes: tobaccos, alcohols, absinthe, opium, kava, *Salvia divinorum*, *Cannabis*, nitrous. (1995; Mercury House 1-56279-069-2, 302 pages, \$16.95).

The Age of Entheogens & The Angels' Dictionary combines two books by Jonathan Ott. First, a radical history of the Pharmacratic Inquisition, the attempt to suppress the direct ecstatic experience of entheogens with *placebo* religious sacraments, and the coming of the Entheogenic Reformation. Plus, a delightful dictionary of sacred inebriants and their mind states, with definitions and quotes from classic drug literature. (1995; Natural Products 0-9614234-7-1 [paperback], 160 pages, \$17.95).

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On Drugs by David Lenson challenges the way we think about psychotropic compounds. How drugs affect philosophy, psychology, religion, literature, and (especially) consumerism; what this implies for public policy. Interesting user's perspective from a professor of comparative literature. A few chapters: Cannabis and the War Against Dreams; Acid metaphysics; Squares and Cubes: Drug Combinations. (1995; Univ. of Minnesota Press 0-8166-2710-X, 252 pages, \$21.95).

The Politics of Consciousness by Steve Kubby speaks to external freedom from "voodoo" drug laws, and then to internal freedom using the wisdom of psychedelic plants. Topics include molecular theology; exopheromones; downloading the cosmic design; mushrooms as manna from heaven; visionary rites-of-passage; how belief creates reality; and healing cancer. Forward by Terence McKenna. (1995; Loompanics 1-55950-133-2, 160 pages, \$18.95).

Sacred Mushrooms and The Law by Richard Glen Boire describes the federal and all state laws on psilocybin mushrooms and compounds. Special topics include the California law against spores; legal difference between mushrooms and their active compounds; and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act as defense for religious use. By a noted lawyer and author of the fine *Entheogen Law Review* newsletter. (1995; Spectral Mind Industries, 36 pages, \$5.95).

Integration, Issue 5 has papers from the First International Conference on Plants, Shamanism, and States of Consciousness. These include Shulgin on the Art of Seeing; Schultes on New World hallucinogens; Callaway, Airaksinen, and Gynther on endogenous harmala and indole alkaloids; Schaefer on Peyote use by Huichol; Furst on Huichol use of *Solanaceae* species; Ott on *ayahuasca* plants; Dennis McKenna on little known hallucinogenic plants; Samorini on the Bwiti religion and *iboga*; Fericigla on hallucinogens as "adaptogens." (Bauer, Hanslmeier, Luna, et al [editors]; Bilwis-Verlag Eschenau, 128 pages, \$29.95*).

The Yearbook for Ethnomedicine, Issue 3 has many excellent papers; those in English include Charles Grob summarizing psychiatric research with hallucinogens; Marlene Dobkin de Rios on Amazon drug tourism; both on adolescent psychedelic suggestibility across cultures; Jonathan Ott on *ayahuasca* analogues for the New Millennium; J.C. Callaway summarizing *ayahuasca* pharmacology; Baker on problem-solving using psychedelics; Valencic on the Eleusian Mysteries; and Wright on the right to raves. From Germany; more papers in German. (Christian Rättsch & John Baker [editors] 1995; VWR 3-86135-030-0, 384 pages, \$39.95*).

Worlds of Consciousness has papers from the 1992 First International Congress for the European College

for the Study of Consciousness. Papers (all in English) include *Hallucinogens in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (Dobkin de Rios), *Addiction and Transcendence as Altered States of Consciousness* (Ralph Metzner), *Structure-Activity Relationships of Classic Hallucinogens and their Analogues* (Shulgin & Jacob), *Thirty Years of Psychedelic Research* (Yensen & Dryer), and seven more. (Schlichting & Leuner [editors] 1995; VWR 3-86135-406-3; 259 pages, \$21.95*).

White Rabbit: a Psychedelic Reader contains reports from writers, artists, visionaries, and others about experiences with psychedelics and other drugs. From Lewis Carroll to William Burroughs, Charles Dickens to Philip K. Dick, and Florence Nightingale to Timothy Leary, these 38 excerpts span centuries of mystical drug use. (John Miller & Randall Koral [editors] 1995; Chronicle 0-8118-0666-9, \$13.95).

Voices from the Edge continues the fine series of interviews started by David Brown & Rebecca Novick in *Mavericks of the Mind*. Interviewees include Jerry Garcia, Alexander and Ann Shulgin, Jean Houston, Elizabeth Gips, Ram Dass, and nine other mind pioneers. Some talk about psychedelics; all are into new visions of mind/body/earth consciousness. (1995; Crossing Press 0-89594-732-3, 402 pages, \$14.95)

Timothy Leary has a new book out, *Surfing the Consciousness Nets: My Lonely Quest for the Reliable Male Afrodesiac*. This intense computer-style graphic story and rant mixes drugs, sex, computers, and various wild ideas and images. Even at 75, Leary continues to push the bounds of mind and body. (1995; Last Gasp 0-86719-410-3, 128 pages, \$16.95).

Plant Intoxicants: A Classic Text on the Use of Mind-Altering Plants is a reprint of Ernst von Bibra's 1855 book on coffees, teas, *Amanita*, *Datura*, coca, opium, *Cannabis*, khat, tobacco, betel, and others. Best scientific book of the time; also discusses social and economic issues. Re-typeset. Extensive technical notes and references by Jonathan Ott. Index. (1995, Inner Traditions 0-89281-496-9, 284 pages, \$16.95).

Ethnobotany: Evolution of a Discipline, edited by Richard Evans Schultes and Siri von Reis, gives us a rich collection of 36 new essays by masters in the study of people and their plants, edited by father of the field. Sections on anthropology, medicine, psychology, religion, and other elements. Ethnopharmacology section with papers on hallucinogens and more by Albert Hofmann, Bo Holmstedt, Dennis McKenna, Gordon Wasson, and others. Scientific name index. (1995; Timber Press 0-931146-28-3, 416 pages, \$49.95).

The Psychedelic Sourcebook by Will Beifuss provides an excellent annotated listing of many sources for plants, seeds, spores, publications, organizations, and other resources having to do with

psychedelics. Nice appendix with doses, conversions, and other data. (1995; Phanerothyme Press, 60 pages, \$9.95).

Growing Gourmet and Medicinal Mushrooms by Paul Stamets continues where his *Mushroom Cultivator* left off. Mushroom natural history, culturing methods, permaculture, grain and sawdust spawn, design of grow rooms and farms, color plates, resource directory, bibliography, index. Details about visionary wood-chip species such as *P. cyanescens* and *azurescens*. (1996 [2nd edition]; Ten Speed Press 0-89815-608-4, 586 pages, \$39.95).

Mushrooms: Poisons and Panaceas by Denis R. Benjamin covers the effects of mushrooms on human health. Includes sections on both the *Psilocybe* and *Amanita* mushrooms. Color photos, identification, range, toxicity, treatment. Good for naturalists and collectors as well as health professionals. (1995; W. H. Freeman 0-7167-2649-1, 448 pages, \$34.95).

A Primer of Drug Action: Concise, Nontechnical Guide to Actions, Uses, and Side Effects of Psychoactive Drugs by Robert Julian is out in a new edition. Comprehensive, but readable; describes how various psychoactive drugs work, both recreational and psychotherapeutic, as well as associated neurotransmitters and receptors. Has a nice chapter on psychedelics, and a section on MAO inhibition. (1995 [7th edition]; W. H. Freeman 0-7167-2619-X, 522 pages, \$19.95).

The DXM FAQ by Bill White tells how DXM (dextromethorphan), an over-the-counter cough remedy, provides several interesting mind-states when taken in larger doses. Describes the effects of DXM at different levels, problems and contraindications, and preparations (with a simple alkaloid kitchen extraction). Also some fascinating speculation on various interactions with the sigma, NMDA, glutamate, and PCP2 receptor families. Interesting reading. (1995; self-published, 188 pages, \$27.95*). Also at <http://oucsace.cd.ohiou.edu/personal/bwhite/dxm.html>.

Drugs and Behavior by Fred Leavitt presents a good college text on mind drugs, both recreational and psychotherapeutic. Very complete, from neurotransmitters to social policy (the author is for legalization). Describes benefits and dangers of many drugs, including effects on memory, creativity, and sex. Organized by topic and effect, not by drug. Glossary, huge bibliography, substance and general indices. (1995 [3rd edition]; Sage Publications 0-8039-4784-4 [paperback], 546 pages; \$29.95).

Drugs, Society, and Human Behavior by Oakley Ray & Charles Ksir gives us another good high school or college text on recreational drugs. Reasonable non-judgmental section on hallucinogens, mostly about LSD. Organized by drug, plus sections on basic drug

actions, social policy, and drug education and treatment. Glossary and index. (1996; Mosby 0-8016-6563-9, 477 pages, \$32.95).

Some other related new titles include: - *Best of High Times, Psychedelic Issue - Deadheads*, story of Grateful Dead followers - *The Shaman*, by Piers Vitebsky - *Legal Highs* has a new edition out - *The Drug Identification Bible*

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Bob Wallace and Mind Books

Bob recently started a mail-order book company, *Mind Books*, to provide a source for the many books related to psychedelics still in print. Bob has been working on this project for several years, after an earlier career in the software field. The DOS old timers out there might remember Bob's product PC-Write, and his pioneering work on the shareware concept. "The early days of the software field are like psychedelics today in many ways," says Bob. "There's great potential to extend and expand the mind using both these tools, but serious work on developing the psychedelics has just been resumed by a few forward-looking researchers, unlike software which has millions of developers worldwide." Bob's column will help MAPS members learn about the available books on psychedelics. The publisher and ISBN are included so readers can order these books from any source they prefer. If you wish to order from *Mind Books*, contact information is at the end of the column.

- Bob Wallace

"If you think there's a solution, you're part of the problem" - George Carlin