

TIME HORIZONS is a concept that refers to the length of time that people consider relevant to their particular decisionmaking processes. I first heard the words used by a friend who was working as an aide to a U.S. Senator. He described Senators as having the longest time horizons of any elected officials

due to their six year term of office, making them more likely than any other elected officials to consider the longer-term effects of policies and laws.

I have been thinking of time horizons lately in reference to MAPS' agenda, in part because of a new research project that MAPS has initiated. As far as I know, this project, a 35 to 43 year follow-up study to Dr. Oscar Janiger's pioneering LSD research, is the longest-term follow-up to any psychedelic research project that has ever been conducted. From 1954-1962, Dr. Janiger administered up to several doses of LSD to nearly 800 people in the Los Angeles area. Subjects in Dr. Janiger's study came from all walks of life and were administered LSD in a non-therapeutic, naturalistic context designed to determine the essence of the LSD experience in terms of process rather than content. Sitting in Dr. Janiger's attic to this day are the files from this experiment which contain some minimal personal information about each of the subjects along with session reports filled out by many of the subjects after their LSD experiences. Dr. Janiger also conducted experiments into the effect of LSD on creativity using painters as subjects, and co-founded the Albert Hofmann Foundation (p. 37).

Letter from Rick Doblin, MAPS President

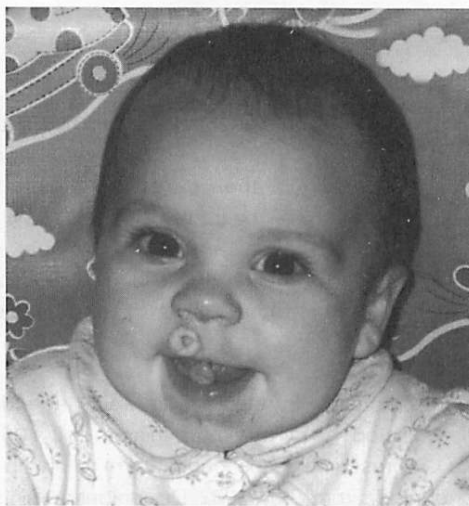
MAPS is assisting Dr. Janiger by locating and interviewing the subjects from his study in order to determine what long-term effects, if any, they report from their LSD experiences. The areas of investigation have to do primarily with the impact of the experiment on emotional and spiritual development, persisting mental or physical side-effects, other drug use, and types of guidance about drug use that the subjects offered to their children and grandchildren. MAPS has hired a full-time researcher to conduct interviews with the subjects, a professional transcriber, and a private detective using only non-intrusive methods to help locate the subjects. About 20 interviews have already been conducted. Our preliminary observations are that the subjects vividly remember their LSD experiences, almost uniformly find them to have been of some lasting value, and do not suffer from persisting negative effects. From a political point of view, the subjects in this follow-up study break all the stereotypes about LSD users since they are in their sixties or older and took LSD before it was controversial. Their testimony will, I think, be of great value in communicating the potential benefits and risks of creating legal contexts for the administration of psychedelics within carefully controlled settings. You will be hearing more about this study as it progresses.

Time horizons have also been on my mind because the outcome of MAPS' multi-year efforts to conduct therapeutic research into the medical uses of marijuana and MDMA will be determined in the next few months. MAPS has been working for over five years to initiate research into the medical use of marijuana. A decision by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) on a grant proposal from Dr. Donald Abrams, UC San Francisco, to research the use of marijuana in the treatment of the HIV-related wasting syndrome is due before the end of September (p.16). NIDA's decision about Dr. Ethan Russo's MAPS-supported proposal to study the use of marijuana in treatment-resistant migraine headache sufferers is expected in November (p.16).

Since its founding in 1986, MAPS has been working to initiate research into the therapeutic use of MDMA. The FDA's decision is expected this fall concerning the MAPS-funded research of Dr. Charles Grob, Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, into the use of MDMA in the treatment of pain and distress in cancer patients. MAPS has also been recently approached by Manuel Tancer, M.D. and Charles R. Schuster, M.D., Wayne State University, and Reese Jones, M.D., UC San Francisco, requesting permission to refer-

ence MAPS' FDA Drug Master File (DMF) for MDMA in their applications to the FDA for permission to conduct NIDA-funded studies of MDMA's sites of action in the brain and pharmacokinetics (p.5). MAPS' MDMA DMF contains the data from MAPS' FDA-required 28-day animal toxicity studies that are prerequisites for the conduct of human research with any compound. The DMF also contains detailed information about the synthesis and purity of the MDMA that David Nichols, Ph.D., the founder of the Heffter Research Institute (p.43), legally manufactured for MAPS in 1986. Dr. Nichols' MDMA was used in the animal toxicity studies as well as Dr. Grob's Phase 1 human research and will also be used in the research of Drs. Tancer, Schuster and Jones.

Dr. Schuster and I first met in 1985 in Geneva, when he was a consultant to the World Health Organization's International Convention on Psychotropic Substances, which was considering MDMA for international scheduling. I went to Geneva as an emissary of the MDMA therapeutic community to argue before the WHO for continued permission to conduct MDMA research legally, and to argue against the criminalization of MDMA in general. Dr. Schuster was in agreement with the need to continue with human research. Dr. Schuster's view was particularly important at the time because it was in his lab at the



University of Chicago that Dr. George Ricaurte had made the first discoveries of MDMA's neurotoxic potential. Needless to say, both my recommendations and Dr. Schuster's opinions about research were swept away in the hysteria of the worldwide War on Drugs. Dr. Schuster went on to become director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse and I went on to found MAPS.

It has been twelve years since I first met Dr. Schuster and almost as long since Dr. Jones and I first met. It is now particularly gratifying to grant them access to the MAPS FDA DMF, thereby assisting them in their respective efforts to conduct human research with MDMA.

I firmly believe that legal contexts will eventually be created for the beneficial uses of psychedelics and marijuana. The War on Drugs and its attendant pressures to limit research with

psychedelics and marijuana cannot be sustained forever in a democratic society committed to scientific and religious freedom and the balancing of the rights of the individual to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness with the needs of society to protect itself from the harms of drug abuse. I am sobered, however, by the fact that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 was considered unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court in a June 25, 1997 decision. Social progress is often measured in decades, generations, centuries, even millennia, rather than months and years. MAPS will continue to utilize lengthy time horizons in its strategies and projects.

Time horizons have also been on my mind because of the recent first birthday of my daughter, Lilah. Now that I have two children, I am thinking more frequently in time increments of

decades and generations. I've also been thinking of the com-mo-tion I inadvertently created by publishing in a previous MAPS Bulletin a picture of my son Eden with an unidentified object on his nose that I mistakenly thought could be readily identified as a Cheerio. So many people speculated that Eden suffered from a birth defect that had something to do with chromosome damage resulting from psychedelics that I felt compelled to identify the nature of the bump on his nose in a subsequent issue. Now in this issue, in the interests of full disclosure and scientific integrity, I must confess that perhaps there is something running in my family tree. Note the picture of Lilah, also with a Cheerio on her face.

I wish you a wonderful summer and urge you to continue your generous support of MAPS. Progress is bound to be slow and MAPS needs the support of all of you for the very long run. With some good fortune, we can enjoy the present precious moments and also keep our eyes on the time horizons that stretch beyond our personal lives into the lives of our descendents, both direct and related only by our shared humanity, whom we will never meet but whose lives can nevertheless be impacted by our work. •

Rick Doblin, MAPS President, August 1997.

