

Dear MAPS,

Just received the new issue of MAPS. Very pleased about the NIDA grant. I must be a rather odd subscriber to MAPS. It's been more than 25 years since rather brief experiments back in the 60s. I'm just an ordinary householder. Yet I continue to be fascinated by the research. It makes no sense that serious study into the nature of certain substances be constantly proscribed, despite circumstantial evidence to suggest there's probable merit in looking further. Keep going.
Morley Chalmers

Dear MAPS,

Congratulations on the NIDA funding [to Dr. Abrams' marijuana study].

I look forward to the information provided by your publication. Especially any dialogue relative to "amateur" research. We have got to find a more respectable term than amateur if contributions are to carry any degree of validity. This is especially important as the political climate of the past 20 years has caused near extinction of most of the professional researchers in the mind drugs field.
Very truly yours,
G.

Dear MAPS,

I just got back from a week's vacation at my parents house and I'd like to share something that happened that I think will be encouraging to MAPS members. I have spent the last few years trying unsuccessfully to show the value of psychedelics to my parents. Few of these attempts have made any forward strides as they are firmly entrenched in the mindset that decades of negative media and centuries of puritanical thought have created.

But this time, I brought along the last two issues of the MAPS Bulletin and put them on the table and suggested that they read this in order for them to better understand what my post-graduation plans were. To my incredible delight and surprise they told me that they were very impressed with the quality of the publication. They said that seeing everything expressed in a rational, scientific, objective manner brought validity to the endeavor, and they dropped their defensive tone about the whole issue. If MAPS can have this effect on my parents, then I think it's safe to assume that many others would also hear our voice through this medium, at least those like my parents who do respond to rational scientific inquiry. Hope this brings some holiday cheer to some of you. Happy new year!
Mark Olson
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www.students.uiuc.edu/~m-olson/

mapsforum

Editor's Note:

Just before his death, Nicholas Saunders established a webpage on the topic of Amateur Research into Psychedelics at <http://hyperreal.org/research/>. In his words:

"This site aims to provide a platform for amateur research into the effects of psychedelic drugs on humans.

I fully acknowledge that the quality of research by amateurs cannot expect to match that done by qualified scientists in well equipped institutions. But, in spite of the limitations, I believe that amateurs can make valuable contributions in this neglected area of science.

Academic research into psychedelics is severely restricted, both by the law and by the attitudes of many orthodox scientists who are unable to contemplate the existence of other levels of consciousness. Government permission, funding, ethical approval and acceptance

of papers by respected journals form greater obstacles, and successful researchers earn less respect for their work than in other areas of science. As a result, very few studies are being conducted in this important area of science.

How this site develops depends on the input received. At the start, it will be a place to suggest subjects for amateur research, suitable methodology, to report results and to suggest ways of checking these by further trials. If enough well-constructed trials are reported, this could eventually lead to an online journal of amateur scientific research...

I am happy to accept the role of moderator and editor and will strive to present a wide range of ideas and observations on the site. I intend to be extremely cautious about reporting unsubstantiated claims or assumptions resulting from amateur trials in case they bring further disrepute to this field of research."

Nicholas Saunders, January 1998.

Sounds of the Chief

I just read *The Secret Chief*, and was impressed that music played an important role in Jacob's work. I would be most interested to know exactly what music he found most effective over the years, but I realize that information may not be available. Perhaps others who have used music regularly in a therapeutic or ritual context could share their experience in this regard.

Thank you,
Jim Schlietett

Editor's Note:

Although we don't have specifics on the music used by Jacob in his therapy, an often recommended book is *Music & Your Mind: Listening With a New Consciousness* by Helen L. Bonny and Louis M. Savary, 2nd Edition, Paperback, 192 pages, Talman Company, 1990, ISBN: 0882680943. Helen Bonny was the music therapist for the LSD research at Maryland Psychiatric Research Institute, Spring Grove, Maryland. She developed the Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music in the 1970s. This method combines relaxation techniques with selected classical music to evoke altered states of consciousness in clients. This method is widely recognized by music therapists, psychotherapists, educators, and other helping professions. The Bonny Foundation requires therapists to complete structured course work and supervised sessions before becoming a fellow in the Association for Music and Imagery.

An article that also appeared on the topic: Bonny, Helen L.; Walter N. Pahnke. The Use of Music in Psychedelic (LSD) Psychotherapy. *Journal of Music Therapy*, 9(2):65-87, Summer 1972.

A footnote on the history of MDMA

Maybe this is of interest to people interested in the history of MDMA and especially MDMA research. Furthermore, it is a telling illustration of the mindless copy-paste syndrome to which most of us are prone. Maybe you could spread this little anecdote to the many contacts MAPS has.

In virtually every book and article on MDMA I've come across so far it can be read that MDMA was originally synthesized and patented by Merck (Germany) as an appetite suppressant, but that it was never marketed. Countless times this information has been copied from text to text—I am guilty of having spread this little bit of history in numerous talks. Still, it is simply wrong. Pascale, a thesis candidate in our group, wanted to be sure and contacted Merck, Germany, for the true story. She found out that:

1) Merck stumbled across MDMA when they tried to synthesize Hydrastinin, a vasoconstrictive and stypitic medicine. MDMA was merely an unplanned by-product of this synthesis. As usual, the process of its synthesis was patented.

2) It can not be reconstructed to what extent Merck tested MDMA and what the results of such testing were, but it can be excluded with certainty that MDMA was ever considered as an appetite suppressant (and, as Merck adds, this indication was not relevant in 1912, something which could have certainly occurred earlier to the more clever minds among us...)

3) It is also certain that MDMA was never considered for marketing by Merck.

So, thinking of Public Enemy who said, "Don't believe the hype," I would even go further and say: "Don't believe *anything* unless you've checked it for yourself!"

Alex Gamma

announcements...

Teluride Mushroom Festival

August 27-30, 1998. Telluride, CO. Contact Fungophile, Inc., P.O. Box 480503, Denver, CO 80248-0503, (303) 296-9359

The Cosmic Game

The English version of Stanislav Grof's new book, *The Cosmic Game: Explorations of the Frontiers of Human Consciousness*, has been published by State University New York (SUNY) Press.

The German translation is called *Kosmos und Psyche: An den Grenzen menschlichen Bewusstseins* and was published by Wolfgang Krueger Verlag in Frankfurt am Main, 1997.

The German edition can be ordered from:
Wolfgang Krueger Verlag
Hedderichstrasse 114
D-60553 Frankfurt am Main Germany
Fax: +49 - 69 - 6062 414
Phone: +49 - 69 - 6062 386

Psychoactivity Conference

October 1-4, 1998, Amsterdam

A conference on the topic of entheogens and psychedelics is being planned for the Fall in Amsterdam. For more information about this event, contact Conscious Dreams, Schinkelkade 59-61, 1075VL Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Tel. +31(0)20-470774, FAX +31(0)20-4707616
<http://neturl.nl/codreams>,
E-mail: codreams@xs4all.nl

Online resources in transpersonal studies

The Fall 1997 *Association for Transpersonal Psychology Newsletter* included a Guide to the Transpersonal Internet and a 1997-98 Listing of Schools and Programs. The Guide is available online at www.virtualcs.com/tpi.html. The ATP can be contacted at P.O. Box 3049, Stanford CA 94309, 650/327-2066.