



MAPS

Bulletin of the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies

One of the special pleasures of directing MAPS is meeting members and learning about what motivates them to participate in our shared adventures. As a result of my recent move to Belmont, Massachusetts, I was contacted by a MAPS member who, conveniently, now lives only a few blocks away. He and his wife invited me to bring my family over for lunch to get acquainted. We gladly accepted their kind invitation.

Shortly after arriving, we were shown a rare collection of original issues of the *Psychedelic Review*, the journal that came out of Harvard in the early to mid-1960s, and learned that our new neighbor's interest in psychedelics stretched over 35 years. We also learned that he is a videomaker, producing documentaries about labor-management relations. During lunch, we learned that he had also been an anti-war activist during the late Sixties and had worked as a draft counselor. I quickly surmised that his psychedelic experiences had played a major role in motivating him to social action. This assumption confirmed my own estimation of the potential value of psychedelic experiences and affirmed the choices I had made in my own life's direction. All very reassuring.

Letter from Rick Doblin, MAPS President

After lunch, we went walking nearby on some wooded property that was the subject of a development battle in which his wife was a principal activist struggling to promote a lower-impact project. During our walk, I asked what motivated him to do his social justice work, even though it was obvious to me already that psychedelics must have played a decisive role. Imagine my surprise and disappointment when he told me that psychedelic experiences actually had made no major contribution to the development of his values and goals. He smiled and said that a more important formative experience was, as a child, reading a series of books about a character called Freddy the Pig, who he said was unconventional, original in thought, moral and kind.

I was stunned, not only because of the vast distance between psychedelics and Freddy the Pig, but because I had just rediscovered a cherished missing link to my own childhood, a link which I had been searching for unsuccessfully for many years. I, too, was a fan of Freddy the Pig, though the name of the character had receded into the mists of childhood despite several efforts to recover the memory. Several years ago, right after the birth of my first child, I had gone to the children's section of the local library searching for some books about pigs, hoping to find some clue as to the series of books that had enraptured me as a child. No luck. I kept this search in the back of my mind but gave it up, with sadness, as a lost cause. Yet in that conversation, Freddy became present in my life again, rather like a dramatic insight during a psychedelic experience.

From this I drew two lessons: it's important to refrain from making rash and simplistic assumptions about people's motivations, and, when people confound my assumptions, what I learn can be more valuable to me than what I thought I already knew.

The community of MAPS members slowly expands. The most effective way for MAPS to grow is through word of mouth. If you can appreciate the priorities reflected in the annual report in this issue of the Bulletin (page 7), please consider renewing your support and supporting our membership drive by speaking about MAPS to a friend. The MAPS staff, Sylvia Thyssen, Carla Higdon, and myself, look forward to getting to know as many of you as we can, for the pleasure of mutual discovery and shared goals, whatever their inspiration.

Best wishes, Rick Doblin, MAPS President.