

# First LSD experiment recalled; more research urged

We've witnessed the return of theateful Dead, tie-dye, patchouli oil and any number of things presumably stamped out from the furby late '60s and early '70s.

suppose that includes "strategic fare," too.

ut on the weekend of April 16-18, umber of people around the oe hope to add fuel to a new ef- to legitimize and further scien- and medical research into LSD marijuana.

he catalyst is the 50th anniver- y on April 16 of the day Swiss rmaceutical researcher Albert ifman accidentally ingested a ill amount of LSD.



**Mike Leonard**  
H-T Columnist

"Many of these tools that have shown great potential for understanding the human mind have been closed off for a generation," says Rick Doblin, president of the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies Inc.

"What we're trying to do is bring

to light what we think are a fair set of studies and conclusions that have come from the first 50 years of LSD — both scientific studies and our observations on the cultural use of the drug."

Doblin is a Ph.D. candidate in Public Policy Studies in the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Members of the group, MAPS, range from physicians and psychiatrists to pharmacologists, college professors and ordinary citizens with extraordinary stories to tell about their experiences with mind-altering drugs.

The new push for research has already begun. In November, the

Food and Drug Administration approved a University of California at Irvine researcher's proposal to study the hallucinogenic drug MDMA on human subjects. It was one of the first such studies allowed since the late 1960s.

"What we're finally seeing, I think, is a revolt on the part of the FDA, which was tired of being pushed around into ideological stances," said Doblin, interviewed by telephone this week. "There's never been a valid scientific reason to suspend this kind of research. It's always been political."

Doblin calls the initial government reaction against such drugs a

tragedy of the times. "It seemed as though many of the people involved in the anti-war movement, the civil rights movement and the environmental movement were also very much involved with the experimentation with psychedelic drugs," he said.

"The counter-reaction against psychedelic drugs was caused in part because they tended to be used by the same people who were in great conflict with the status quo and the powers that be," Doblin said.

"Consequently, what we've seen

see Leonard, page C2

*(CIN)*  
*Bloomington Herald-Times*  
*Jan. 19, 1993*

# LSD experiment recalled; more research urged

Leonard, from page C1

is people like (former drug czar) William Bennett demonize these drugs as if there were no redeeming benefits, no value to them at all. It's been like the war on communism: good against evil, all black and white, no middle ground at all. And that's simply not true."

Doblin is quick to add that ordinary citizens "often used these drugs in extremely irresponsible ways, and that attracted the attention of the police and the regulators."

Neither Doblin nor MAPS advocates LSD use outside of clinical studies. But MAPS strongly supports the medicinal use of marijuana for AIDS and cancer patients and supports opening up research into the numerous areas where initial research on hallucinogenic drugs showed all kinds of promise.

The CBS program, "48 Hours" recently looked into the new scientific push to resume research into psychoactive drugs and presented powerful testimony from a number of directions, including the story of a man who said LSD therapy 25 years ago cured the alcoholism that surely would have killed him by now.

Not long ago, the International *Medical Tribune* published a moving letter from Bloomington resident Jean Farmer, who described how the drug, EVE, a medical cousin to MDMA or Ecstasy, helped her dying husband, Richard, cope with his terminal illness and allowed him to die "with dignity and grace, never losing his lucidity till the last breath."

Although Doblin is hesitant to use the word, "fun," with regard to the serious study of psychoactive drugs, he nonetheless calls the planned Bicycle Day, probably on April 17, to be "a humorous way to commemorate Dr. Hoffman's first planned experiment with LSD."

After accidentally absorbing some LSD on April 16, 1943, and getting a mild hallucinogenic reaction, Hof-

programs — a rather large dose — on April 19. When he realized he could no longer hang round his laboratory, he embarked on what must have been an amazing 45-minute bicycle ride home.

"Hoffman said the ride home became increasingly difficult, which is no surprise since he took what we now know to be 2 1/4 to 5 times a normal dose," Doblin said.

"By the time he got home he thought he was dying. The value of LSD is that it shakes up your egocentric perspective in a way that dreams do. Things aren't logical, but flow from the unconscious to the conscious. It can certainly feel like an ego death."

Hoffman came down from his LSD trip later that evening and said he awoke the next morning feeling refreshed and inspired. "He recog-

nized then and there that he had found a phenomenal tool for the study of the mind and psychotherapy," Doblin said.

Bicycle Day commemorations are being planned throughout the world. In addition, Hoffman, now in his 80s, may attend an international conference on LSD, planned for Los Angeles in May.

For further information, Doblin and MAPS can be reached at 1801 Tippah Ave., Charlotte, NC 28205.