

"Americans Deprived of Ecstasy"

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In spite of all of the defenses of "ecstasy" or MDMA, by a Harvard professor in a conservative three-piece suit -- American authorities have decided to outlaw the hallucinogenic, psychedelic powder of the eighties. Goodbye to the yuppie way of arriving at self-knowledge.

If LSD is a big blow of the hammer, then ecstasy would be more like a touch of a tuning (?) fork. A little vibration and pretty music, a pill that you give the "La" (?), the intimate harmony, the "connection" with yourself and others, peace, or at least the opposite of fear. Briefly, when one speaks of ecstasy, the psychedelic powder of the eighties, a powder from that moment on reasonable, effective, functional "yuppie" one hears all of the rhetoric of the sixties. Peace and love, harmony, inner peace, consciousness on all levels.

And before this stammering of the language of Dege, American authorities have estimated that it was history itself that must have stammered, that once again one (tried out) the transcendental virtues of psychedelic hallucinogens, that once again one would go, as with LSD and PCP, find oneself soon with (the lights) (?) and consequently in flight hanging over the window of their fourth floor. And they therefore have done as others have always done, these authorities; they outlawed ecstasy.

And maybe after all ecstasy is beautiful and good, all new, potentially remarkable, technological and modern. This is, in any case, the only drug in the history of American drug to have a cabinet of advocates on Wall Street, the cabinet "Dewey, Ballantine, Bushby, Palmer, and Wood," to defend its interests before the administration and media.

The name ecstasy is already a big media strike. Ecstasy is always enticing. While taking this thing called "3,4 Methylendioxyamphetamine," the scientific name of ecstasy, one has the advantage to pass from a derangement of molecules to a reasonable hedonist.

In spite of all the defenders of ecstasy -- the professors of Harvard, adventurous psychoanalysts, happy cancer patients, middle-class couples who are now getting along, conservative gentlemen in three-piece suits -- the American administration has decided to declare this thing illegal from July 1 for one year, while waiting for more conclusive studies. The DEA, while announcing Friday its decision, cited a study done at the University of Chicago on a drug similar to ecstasy that caused permanent cerebral lesions in rats.

According to the DEA one is able to procure ecstasy in twenty-one of fifty American states and in Canada, and the powder is particularly popular on campuses and in homes of "young professionals," especially in California, Texas, Florida, and New York. Gays take it before dancing in discos, college students before going to class, depressives before going to their analysts. Ecstasy is a popular substance, not expensive (between \$10-20 of 100-150 milligrams) and is considered harmless, even though it has caused death in two people, one a psychoanalyst in California with a heart problem who took a double dose. Numerous secondary effects analogous to those of amphetamines -- acceleration of heart rate and arterial pressure, cold sweat, anxiety, paranoia and depression -- have been observed. The defenders of ecstasy pretend that these incidents have occurred in people who have bought in the street that which they thought was MDMA and perhaps was not.

The partisans of ecstasy say very nice things about the powder. Its effects, they say, always last a half an hour but its lessons stay always in the memory. They tell of sweeping away of neuroses, profound peace and serenity and love. One loses touch with reality. No hallucinations, no, none, only a sudden, perfect connection between self and the world. "One is able, under its influence, to take the telephone and call one's mother, she'll doubt nothing". MDMA is not seen as a hard drug but as a therapeutic instrument and until today more or less legal (not approved by the FDA but usage not illegal), to accelerate psychoanalysis. The yuppie way -- and therefore functional -- to arrive at self-knowledge. As LSD has Timothy Leary, professor at Harvard, ecstasy has Rick Ingrasci, a psychiatrist in the Boston area, who has treated/prescribed more than two hundred and nine patients with success. It also has its associate to the press, a young heir of a Chicago fortune who founded a center of research on MDMA, Rick Dublin, who frequents press rooms and praises the virtue of tolerance of ecstasy, which he calls ADAM. "Thanks to ADAM," he says, "one is able to understand Jerry Falwell," the pope of the Moral Majority for whom surely ecstasy is not of this low world.

The defenders of ecstasy, armed with their cabinet of advocates, pretend to be themselves opposed to free sale of MDMA. But they oppose its total outlaw. They think to hold with it a potentially long series of psychology treatments. But, the total outlaw of MDMA prevents pursuit of research in this domain. "The veritable question," Dr. Ingrasci declared recently in an interview in New York, "concerns the utilization of medications in our society. There has been a tacit decision to say that one can take drugs to allay depression/sadness. This authorizes the taking of aspirin or valium, which might have effects more dangerous than MDMA. But it is not always permitted to take medication to explore yourself."