September 1, 1985

XTC By Jeff Leen In the glow of Sarasota's magenta sunsets, 31-year-old perpetual student Rick Doblin is marshalling a psy-chedelic revival. "Ecstasy" is not just another designer high,

says the latter-day Timothy Leary, but a font of wisdom, a tonic for the anxieties of modern life. Is he walking into a new age, or tripping on his own shoelaces'

> among Siesta Key's sabal palms. Inside sit at a kitchen table set according to a homey logic: a bowl of onions and potatoes, a coffee grinder, cut flowers. Polished pots and pans shine down from the walls. A woman prepares fish for dinner. Her youthful energy makes it difficult to believe that she is, at 36, the mother of five children. The woman — a registered nurse is talking about a drug that she calls Adam.
> "I had heard about all the benefits so naturally I wanted to try it," she says. "When I did, it was like

somebody turned on a light inside and Nearby the two children, her children, are eating ice cream. "I've always been into nature and plants and other things," she continues. "It heightened it up for me.

It's not like you see things that aren't there. It makes what you see more vivid. You appreciate it more. The LSD or any hallucinogenics I did in the 60s were always trouble for me. With Adam, I feel like I'm totally in control. It's the best drug. It emanates from the heart." Seated at the kitchen table, smiling paternally as he listens to this tale, is Rick Doblin, a short, muscular man radiating calmness. It's his drug. He's proud of it.

The woman is speaking earnestly,

reasonably.

Then she drops this: She's given

the drug to two of her children. To

her 16-year-old son, who wasn't

doing well at school. To her

19-year-old daughter. Who was feeling suicidal. "She told me she was going to die," the woman says. "I thought if she did Adam as a therapeutic drug, it might give her some insight. She now has a job and she's living at her own The woman beams.

JEFF LEEN is a Herald staff writer.

"She's much happier."

blood-orange sun has me pretty good times)." just slipped down on a frame house hidden It's been in Life magazine. It's been in Doonesbury. Ecstasy proponents believe their

It's pronounced "ecstasy." They're calling it the yuppie high, the drug of the '80s. Rick Doblin says it offers inner

It is a seductive notion, a drug to end despair. Mankind's search for the perfect drug has been imperfect, dating back to the ancient Greeks,

Rick Doblin smiles in approval.

who developed a potion — nepenthe — that they thought could cure sorrow and emotional pain. Heroin, refined from opium at the start of the 20th Century, was hailed as a nonaddictive cure for drug dependency and other diseases of the soul. Cocaine, until recently, was thought to be a relatively harmless mood elevator, a balm for the hectic modern world, until young executives began burning out on \$500-a-day habits. And now comes a new drug, known to chemists as 3,4 methylenedioxy-methamphetamine, or MDMA. It is known on the street as Adam, or XTC, or, most commonly,

the 80s" and "the yupple way of knowledge." Startling testimonials abound. People you wouldn't ordinarily expect to take drugs scrounge for superlatives to describe this one. "It's like the Sabbath at the end of a long week," a Philadelphia rabbi told The Washington Post. "It is the opposite of paranoia," a 50ish health care executive told New York magazine. "A monk spends his whole life cultivating the same awakened attitude it gives you," Brother David Steindl-Rast, himself a Benedictine monk from Big Sur, told Newsweek. And this, from the old panjandrum of LSD himself, Timothy Leary: "I was sitting there feeling better than I'd ever felt in my life. (And I've had

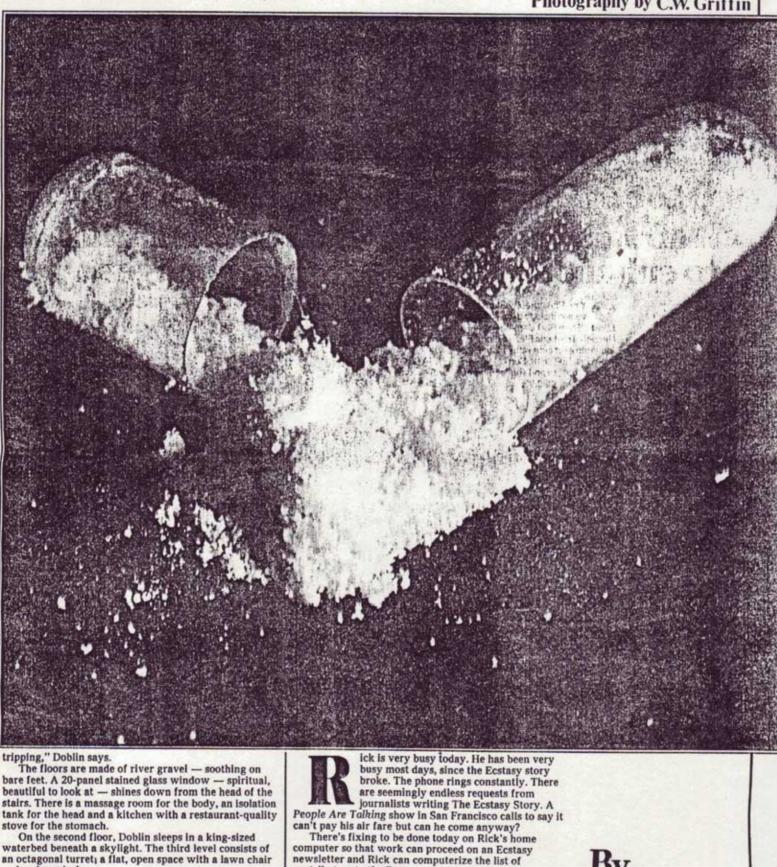
drug could ease psychic pain, treat cocaine addiction, comfort terminal cancer patients, and ease all sorts of nsions — even global tensions. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration says it could cause permanent brain damage. It was an unlikely controversy, as it spawned an unlikely spokesman: Rick Doblin, 31, an obscure college student from Sarasota. Within the le six months, Doblin has been quoted time and again defending the drug and extolling its virtues Doblin does not carry the

credentials of the psychedelic gurus of the past. He is not a Harvard professor, like Leary was, nor an artist-philosopher like Aldous Huxle nor an anthropologist like Carlos Castaneda. He was just some . . . guy . . living in the suburbs of Sarasota Rick Doblin's house sits at the end of a straight-as-an-arrow, dead-end street 10 minutes east of Sarasota

Bay. More than 10 years ago, when the house went up, the land was described as the fringe of civilization Now, it resembles nothing so much a rustic suburb. Doblin might see something in all that; the significance of living on a dead-end street. He has spent more than 13 years examining his life in

was 21, intending it to serve as "metaphor for the center" in his life. The metaphor required a lot of money; it cost more than \$100,000 \$80,000 from a trust fund left to Doblin by his grandfather and \$20,000 borrowed from his parents. The house is a three-story rectangle of weathered cedar that towers above the surrounding pine. Inside, a 20-foot ceiling rises toward

the woods.
"I built the home in a way to



Except there is no TV.
"TV causes brain damage," Rick says.

Rick points out that his friend has a cigarette in his hand, right now.
"You know how difficult change is for me," the young man says. Rick says he wants to be at his friend's Continued from page 9

Jerry Falwell lecture to see if they had any "common ground." Rick reluctantly agreed to resign from the foundation. For the good of the Cause. The phone rings. A local newspaper wants an "When am I going to get my schoolwork done?" he asks with a little smile. It is a good question. Rick Doblin has been an

undergraduate for 14 years. Doblin's current course of study at New College in Sarasota, a liberal arts college on the experimental side, is toward a degree in "transpersonal psychology."
In his proposal he wrote: "Happily, no understanding of the physical side of being human is complete without a study of sexuality. Therefore,

professors wrote in the margin) as well as field work of an independent nature." ('Provocative!' the professor wrote.) Doblin got New College to accept his lobbying for Ecstasy as a summer independent study project. While the other adults are talking around the kitchen table, Doblin reaches into his pocket and comes up with a white capsule, the size of an Extra-Strength Tylenol. Doblin smiles a here-we-go smile and swallows it with a sip of water from a

coffee cup. The powder inside the gelatin shell is a

variant of MDMA, a chemical cousin Rick calls MDMB or "Eden." The effect will be similar, he says, but there is an important difference: MDMA became illegal in the United States on July 1, while MDMB is as legal as aspirin. MDMA - it "produces less warmth," is the way he puts it. Ecstasy and its cousins, he said, "are the gentlest, kindest, softest psychedelics that we know of.

Rick says. We move into a tent in the back yard. Rick says will be better out there. Vivaldi is playing on a stereo in the tent in the darkness. Someone lights a candle. Rick lies back and shuts his eyes. He talks about his high school days in the "I was so shy," he says. "I thought Beatle songs were silly love songs. That's how I missed the 60s."
We go for a walk. On our way to the beach, we stop on a bridge and sit on a wooden bench. Rick is

very calm. His voice seems to float out of his body. One of Rick's friends, a thin young man in his twenties, walks up to where we sit. Doblin had given him a dose of MDMB earlier in the evening.
"I've been in a real rut," the young man says
after a while. "Doing cocaine every day for the past month. I have no energy. I don't do anything but watch television. Now, on the MDMB, the young man sees the

our breath and we'll be safe down there on the ocean floor.' And my attitude was, 'Let's see if we can surf on this.' "
Surf he did. In a few months ago, Rick went from being an unknown undergraduate at New College to becoming something of a national celebrity.

an encyclopedic grasp of psychedelics and psychotherapy, the fruits of more than a decade of study. For more than a year, he has been in touch with the DEA and the FDA and the World Health Organization and an assistant secretary general at the United Nations arguing the case for MDMA. He has appeared before monks at monasteries telling them they

The last thing Rick Doblin wants to do is "Turn on, Tune in, Drop out." He is not "spaced out." He speaks logically on the issues surrounding MDMA and demonstrates

He says that's one of the effects MDMA has "It's a drug," he says, "that you want to do with your parents." When Rick Doblin talks about psychedelic drugs, he does not invoke Timothy Leary. He

talks about Galileo. He points out that Galileo

invented the telescope, which the Catholic Church promptly banned. Galileo died under

"What the telescope is to astronomy and the microscope is to the physical sciences, psychedelics is to psychology," Doblin says. "What a psychedelic does is it takes some feeling and it amplifies it, so you can see it clearer. It's a tool." In news reports MDMA is usually described as a watered-down cross between a psychedelic and an amphetamine. The drug was credited with "healing fear," deepening insight and

said it removed blocks in their patients and made them get better faster. Side effects were described as clenching of jaw muscles, high blood pressure, vomiting and nausea. At least one person has died from MDMA: a California psychotherapist with a heart condition who took a double dose.

potential for abuse. And, perhaps most interestingly, the MDMA's proponents said the insight did not fade after the drug wore off. In Boulder, Colo., bumper stickers and T-shirts cropped up announcing: "Don't get married for six weeks after XTC." But the articles, even the most glowing, were also cautionary. Nobody knew much about MDMA.

Continued from page 13 the campus and set up their tents for a peace protest. There was Kundalini yoga. There was a nude swimming pool. A coed pool.

"For our independent study program, we arranged to buy our own island in Sarasota Bay and speak only Russian," Rick says. "We stayed out there until we ran out of things to

But all the psychology and psychedelics, all the freedom, left him foundering. LSD, he

found, wasn't always helpful.
"I had a lot of difficult experiences," he says. "I didn't know how to handle them. I ended up being very, very frightened of LSD." On LSD, his tendency to self-analysis often shifted into overdrive. He became hypercritical of himself, torturing himself with a perfectionist's sadism. He dropped out of New College. He traveled. He tried primal scream therapy, but

the strength to go back to school."

Working with an extreme perfectionism, he was able to lay four concrete blocks an It took a year to complete.

Standing in the center of his handball court
13 years later, Rick Doblin can see that the court's walls are faded yellow, cracked and chipped, but the court itself is playable and

looks sturdy as a canyon. The condition of the court makes him a little sad, though. He notices a butterfly clinging to the wall and this seems to cheer him.
"I overbuilt this," he says. "This is so solid it could be a place to go in a hurricane. I was so nebulous in my head that, as a balance, I made this incredibly strong.

It is a few hours after noon, and Doblin is taking his exercise — "drugs and exercise go together" — by swimming laps in the New

College's celebrated nude pool. Now it is strictly a place for people with swimming "You see, even when I have my

man and woman arrive, and a few minutes later a middle-aged man with a toddler also wades in. The woman is a friend of Rick's

The young man puffs at his cigarette.
"How 'bout you, Rick? How are things going for "Things are almost coming together," Rick says. "It's getting very close."
"I want to go to your graduation, too. Hey, I'll probably graduate before you."
"You definitely will graduate before me," Rick

talking about his construction company. After Rick built his house, he started the business, intending to build solar-heated,

always be straight or on the level, but our buildings are," the company stationery read.

He built eight houses — "all cedar, all custom-designed, all different" — in seven years.

At one point, he was building five houses at once.
"It was too much," he says. At the end of it, he had a design to make. Did I want to

custom-designed, cedar houses. "We may not

you going to graduate, when are you going to finish?' " he says. "You're not in school to finish. You're in school to learn. That's why I've been in school 14 years now. There's two things. There's education and there's graduation. I'm going after the education. He says his father, who runs a drug abuse clinic In Chicago, understands what he is doing. He says his mother mainly worries that he'll get into trouble with the law.

There is a breeze off the Gulf, cool and salty, and the streets seem especially quiet and empty. Rick Doblin, perpetual college student, national media star, is in the middle of an Ecstasy trip, and he is sitting on a bench on the side of a bridge looking out into the night. No wild hallucinations. Peaceful. And that Is it. Later, on the beach, barefoot under a three-quarter moon, Rick stepped in and out of the waves rushing up the sand. The sand was sugar white, almost luminous in the moonlight. "The

more than cheap pop psychology:
"One of the reasons people like war," he had said, "is that wars get people into the more heightened experience of consciousness."
"It's easier to die than to change," he had said.
"Psychedelics," he had solemnly pronounced, "are the brain's nuclear energy."

oblin first encountered MDMA in

1982 while he was at the Esalen

of the eight — behind MDA and ahead of LSD and mescaline. When given massive doses of Ecstasy, the As Doblin launched his lonely campaign to win establishment respectability for Ecstasy, he decided to run a reverse: contact first all the people who would be most against it. So it was that a phone call from Rick Doblin came in to the Drug Enforcement Administration

Doblin essentially told the DEA, Hey, this is some *.

just as it was preparing to make Ecstasy illegal.

The young man leaves and Rick suddenly begins

contributors to the Ecstasy cause in the name of something called, "The Earth Metabolic Design

"I'm one of the few people who uses the word psychedelics, anymore," Doblin says. "The other

a net loss. "I had a decision to make. Did I want to stay in it to prove to everyone I could do it? I don't believe that the point of life is to struggle

He mentions that his younger brother followed

in his father's footsteps and became a doctor, and

the point, either.

he could have done the same thing, but that wasn't

'My parents are always asking me, 'When are

His house was mortgaged to finance his business and now his parents own it. These days he gets by on the \$650 they send him each month.

reason you don't want to do it again in a few days, he said of his drug, "Is that you want to save and savor it. Like you don't want to eat at the most expensive French restaurant in town every night." Doblin spoke long and discursively. On the beach, in the soft glow of the sand and the peaceful spell of the evening, what he said seemed penetratingly profound. In the morning, in the notes in the steno pad, his statements seem little

Institute in California taking a class on psychedelics called "The Mystical Quest." A good friend there gave drug that had never been thoroughly tested.

The only serious research had been conducted in a secret army search for truth serums in 1953. The army gave MDMA and seven other psychedelic drugs to lab animals. MDMA was found to be the second most toxic

than just a profession. It is something like a mythic quest. Not long after the sojourn in the isolation tank, Doblin had a dream. He was in a hospital bed next to an old man, an old man who was getting ready to die. The old man in the dream had been in

crumble or my work could grow through the problems," he says. To Doblin, psychedelic psychotherapy is more a Nazi concentration camp. Doblin's real life relatives had died in the camps, but this old man had survived. He was dying now, 40 years later. "The old man said, 'I couldn't die until this moment because I've had a mission for the last 40 years, and

I didn't know what it was. And now I know what it

Jeff Leen

Doblin the drug. She said it would make him feel

"I thought, 'Who just wants to feel good?' That sounds boring," he says as we ride in his Chevy pickup truck to his house in Sarasota. "I really

didn't think much of it. I didn't even take it until I

When he tried it with his girlfriend, "It was one of the most loving days of my life," he says. "I remember in the middle of it saying to my girlfriend, 'There's no drug, it's just us.'

broken up, he found himself having one of the loneliest days of his life. He took some MDMA and

solution, "I got the sense out of that I could either

crawled into an isolation tank for two days.

There, floating in the darkness and saline

A year later, when Doblin and his girlfriend had

got back to Florida."

Continued on page 12

is and I can die.' And I asked him, 'Well, what is it?' And he said, 'It's to tell you to be a psychedelic psychotherapist. For three years, Rick Doblin has been a member of a small, tightly knit underground that includes eminent Harvard psychiatrists, prominent psychotherapists, brilliant researchers and sojourners of the psychedelic who never completely abandoned the path Leary blazed in the 1960s. Some of these men and women synthesized MDMA way back in the late 1960s, usually in clandestine California labs. For a decade, these doctors and therapists quietly used the drug to treat people with marital problems, people with cancer and — in

weeks that might have taken years, or forever, in conventional analysis.
Then, in June 1985, the DEA announced an emergency ban putting MDMA in Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act, the same classification as heroin and LSD. Long before the Ecstasy Story broke, Rick Doblin was behind the scenes, orchestrating a serious but somewhat quixotic campaign to keep the drug from being outlawed. Given the history of the psychedelic underground, Doblin's insistence or passing through proper channels is something of an anomaly. The early proponents of LSD made it a high virtue to thumb their noses at "the system" painting old school buses in Dayglo and parading

down Main Street, blaring strange music and

hanging out the windows. But eventually, the

theatrics wore thin, and the anticipated psychedelic age faded into historical footnote. The drugs, and the people who lauded them, were too wild, too unpredictable to become the great spiritual

some cases — people with nothing more pressing than curiosity. They say they got astonishing results, making leaps of therapeutic progress in

resource that had been promised. The fanfare died. Ecstasy is far milder, far more predictable in its results than LSD, Doblin says, and therein lies its great value. This time, the psychedelic revolution is coming at you with Izod shirts and Apple computers and law-firm letterheads. And that, Doblin believes fervently, is why this time it's here "When the publicity wave started coming to MDMA," Rick says, "the attitude of a lot of the people was, 'We've been thinking of using about five to 15 times the therapeutic doses."

So far, it's not a major street drug problem; the Berkeley clinic sees 100 cocaine overdoses a

month. There have been no MDMA fatalities at

political and legal battle over MDMA heats up. The case, pitting the MDMA lobby against DEA, is now being argued before a DEA administrative law judge whose ruling is expected next year. In the meantime, Rick embarks on his latest quest: To found a pharmaceutical company that will pay for the extensive and costly tests required to win Federal Drug Administration approval for MDMA. He figures it will cost \$10

the DEA's trump card against MDMA: a

be the same.

believe in.

because nothing happened."

His job is complicated by what so far has been

University of Chicago study finding that MDA, close chemical cousin of MDMA, causes brain

damage in laboratory rats. The researchers are now looking at MDMA itself, and Haislip of the

DEA believes the results, still unpublished, will

be the first to know." He calls the government's

arguments "shamelessly political" scare tactics.

The eldest of four children of a doctor, he was raised in Skokie, Ill., in a house designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. But something wasn't right.
"I went to my Bar Mitzvah, and that was one of the most significant turning points of my life," he said. "Not because anything happened but

hen Rick Doblin came to New

America was mired in Vietnam.

and Doblin was wallowing in his

College in 1971, he was lost.

own search for something to

Doblin says the studies are meaningless because the doses are ridiculously large. The Pro-Ecstasy Earth Metabolic Foundation has done contradictory studies of its own, which in turn are dismissed by the DEA.

Doblin is unfazed. "I'm taking MDMA."

Doblin says. "If it causes brain damage, I want to

the clinic. There has been no evidence of irreversible brain damage, Smith says. Even as the media fires begin to cool, the

"My reaction was who is this guy," says Frank Saplenza, the DEA chemist who spoke with Doblin.



"We're seeing on the average about four cases a month," says Dr. David Smith, founder of the Haight-Ashbury Free Medical Clinic. "The individuals are She has tried MDMA. Rick quits swimming

and goes over to talk with her.
"It creates a psychological feeling of
euphoria," the woman says. "It feels like a high beam of energy. You take a breath and it's like it lasts for three hours. I can't resist it. But it takes its toll. Coming down is hard."

The first time the young woman tried MDMA she stripped off her clothes and ran naked through e forcet with her best friend. this to have a good time. You're relying on naked through a forest with her best friend.
"It's real intimate, it's a real drug for something else to get it done. "It's just a drug.

In high school, he felt "too intellectual," too well-acquainted with college-level calculus and the classics, too ignorant of his own emotions. Girls terrified him. At New College, he discovered humanistic psychology, the teachings of Abraham Maslow girls and LSD. The first time he did LSD he could el "the emotion opening in my head. On his 21st birthday, just before he began to build his house, Doblin took acid and h. 1 an epiphany. He was at home, and he put on a record. A song played and then there was silence. He heard an air-raid siren. "In the tripping mind, it was, 'This is it: they've dropped the bomb.' And suddenly I got this great fear of dying. Then I thought, 'If I was going to die, I only have a few seconds to live, so I'll just live it up. I'll walk outside and walk toward the bomb and pay attention. Then I went outside and I saw 30 shades of green. I started walking around, looking for the bomb. The fear of death and the tripping gave me this hyperawareness."
The world didn't end. Which left Doblin with the problem of what to do with his life.

going to eat for the rest of my life," he says. New College seemed the ideal place for a young man searching for the meaning of life. There were American Indians who came to Continued on page 19 Intimacy," she says. "You really get to a lot of There is something about the woman that makes her seem different from the others. "I'm not as infatuated with it as I used to be," she says. "Anything you fall in love with after a while reality sets in. You get to know what it is and you realize that you're using

His grandfather was a wealthy industrialist,

and Rick knew that he would receive a substantial trust fund when he came of age. "I didn't have to worry about what I was

to the physical," he says. "I would work psychologically and I would eventually gather

A few minutes earlier, an afternoon rain shower cleared the pool, which was once New

25 EXTRA PER

VALUE WITHOUT COMPROMISE * Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health. Letters are advocating the use of drugs. We the article on Rick Doblin and his symbolisms, and words. It is challenglive in a world where most are inability to believe that there is a ing, intriguing, and makes you want miracle psychedelic drug that can end to know more about Ecstasy. If I looking for the panacea to all their problems — the key to happiness. There is neither one person, one mankind's pain. I must say I totally agree with him. Drugs are not were 20 years younger and not quite as smart as I am, who knows? theory, one belief, one book, nor one panaceas, and are medicines only But I am not 20 years younger, but I do remember the gurus of LSD, cocaine, and other so-called "recrewhen used in the proper setting and with the proper attitude.

tials" of past psychedelic gurus.

Lauderhill

All types of claims can be made

terms with it. ognize myself in the article. A few clarifications seem important. The opening story about the family with a

suicidal 19-year-old, and a delinquent troubled 16-year-old left the impression that the mother just gave the

several days afterwards, and are doing better only because every day they choose to act in a responsible I have not been a student for 14 years. That boggles even my imagination. This is my fourth year. During the years of my construction career, I

Furthermore, mankind's pain can

never be ended nor should it be, since pain is an integral and neccessary part of life just as surely as is joy. When

psychedelics are used in a therapeutic

context, people are encouraged to go

deeper into their pain, and come to

Though sensationalized, I did rec-

manner. was not a student.

properly tested. Ronnie Greenspan Hollywood

Rocco A. Galabrese, Ph.D.

MDMA to her children and then, presto, she said they were better. Actually, they experienced the MDMA under supervision in a thera-

peutic context, were monitored for

The Tropic editor told a story

Rick Doblin

pill that will lead to total satisfaction. This state can only be achieved by taking the time to evaluate one's ation drugs." I know what they did to my friends and to people I only read needs and by learning to accept life as it is. This may not be immediate gratification; however, it is complete Your article is a prelude to tragedy. Valerie Dworkin Gene Lawrence gratification. West Palm Beach From Jeff Leen's article one might get the impression that we have in our midst another "perfect drug," the drug of the '80s. A psychedel-ic/amphetamine panacea that comes complete with its own guru. I think the author did well, but not too well, when he carefully noted that Doblin does not carry the "creden-

I am extremely upset by those who

CENTURY 25 AT LAST! A great tasting cigarette that saves you money.

A few days after taking it I had as having an acute psychotic reaction.

After reading your story I was outraged; it paints far too rosy a picture of this controversial drug. I blame myself for taking MDMA. I do not take any drugs now and feel fortunate. It could have been much

peace. Is this utopia in a capsule... or just another bad trip? "Ecstasy," and it is hyped to be - at last — the perfect drug. In various quarters, Ecstasy is being called "the antidote to alienation," "the drug of minute detail, and he sees meanings and connections in almost everything that touches it. He says he built his house when h exposed cedar beams sheltering imposing walls of solid granite. The effect is that of a big, opulent cabinir reassure people who are Photography by C.W. Griffin

an octagonal turret; a flat, open space with a lawn chair and a phone lack. It is, as Rick says, the perfect home for a college

people say, 'Don't use that, it has too many bad associations, it brings up a lot of bad things from the past. I think it's good to go head on because you bring these fears out and most of them are based on misinformation. Rick's outspokenness has created a rift in the foundation. There are those who feel he's too wild, that some of the things he's said to the press ! indicate he favors recreational use of MDMA - he talked openly of taking MDMA and going to hear

a class in Psychology of Women is included as well as one in Human Sexuality ('Bravo!' One of his

Rick says MDMB is somewhat less intense than A few minutes go by. "I'm beginning to feel it,"

folly of all this.

"I'm going to get my s--- together, stop smoking start exercising, go back to school," he says. "I'm going to graduate." ourselves as an underground counterculture and now there's this publicity wave coming and what we should do is dive down and hold

don't need to meditate themselves into: frustration, they can get a religious experience just by taking a capsule. He has even written the pope. He has appeared at public hearings on the drug and rubbed shoulders with DEA agents who would put him in jail if they caught him with it.

He badly wants to work within the system.

spreading love among users. Terminal cancer patients said it consoled them. Psychiatrists But because of its mild effects — no hallucinations, no "wired" feeling — the drug was quickly branded a "yuppie high." All

Nonetheless, a small band of doctors and therapists had used MDMA to treat their patients since the early 1970s, feeding hundreds, perhaps thousands of humans a

even the primal scream didn't seem to go deep enough. He went back home to Skokie and just sat. Finally, he asked his father to give him the tuition money for a year at New College so he could use it to build a handball court for the school. "I got the idea that I had taken it as far as I could and I needed to switch from the mental

A green-suited campus security guard strides into the tranquility and tells Rick that no dogs are allowed in the pool area. work-within-the-system philosophy, I get into trouble," Rick says. "I have a lot of experience being a lesson to others, a fact I don't want to repeat." Rick gets out and puts Wolf in his truck. When he jumps back into the pool, a young

together" — by swimming laps in the New College pool.

He is the only one in the pool, and as he swims his dog. Wolf, runs beside him, barking, up and down, up and down. Wolf was a gift from Gregg Allman; the rock star is a friend of Rick's. Wolf is half Belgian shepherd and half timber wolf.

The Selling of Ecstasy You have done your readers a grave and terrible disservice with your Sept. 1 publication of Ecstasy. Thousands of people, mostly young, some middle-aged, some old, because of your enticing article extolling the virtues of this "mild" psychedelic drug of the '80s will try it. Some will like the drug enough to repeat. Others

will overdose. Many will become tripped up psychologically on another new drug fad. You have dressed your article up fit to kill - the right colors, smells,

about.

began a terrible hellish ordeal.

I experimented with MDMA on one occasion. My initial reaction to the drug was pleasurable. However, Ecstasy was no panacea for me; rather it flashbacks that resulted in intense paranoia and nightmarish hallucinations. The outcome of this trauma was a two-week stay in the mental ward of a hospital, where I was diagnosed

about some promising new quasi-psychedelic chemical, which in the present case, has not even been about his youthful friend Doug, and his problems with drugs. He concluded with a cautionary statement about