

Critical of Story on 'Ecstasy'

That was a great advertisement you ran for Rick Doblin and his "safe" Ecstasy (MDMA) drug on the front page of August 24 edition. I hope you billed him for it.

The timing was perfect - two days before school opened. Now every kid in town will want to try the stuff.

BRUCE H. THURBER
Sarasota

Disliked Story About Rick Doblin

With the drug situation as it is today, how can you possibly justify giving Rick Doblin thousands of dollars worth of publicity to make money to produce the drug MDMA for profit?

This drug is probably in the same category as that of heroin, cocaine, opium and LSD - in that when handled by the medical profession it has been a blessing to those who suffer, but look at the mess we're in. We lost a lot of young people in the '60s who were aided and abetted by Timothy Leary and LSD.

This drug, MDMA, or Ecstasy, is for those who want to get in touch with their feelings - break down the barriers of communication and experience exquisite insight - great in the hands of the medical profession but deadly to those who want to try a new thrill. The article belongs in a medical journal - not in the town newspaper.

C. ESPENSCHIED
Sarasota

9/5/85 **Letters to the Editor**

Drugs Are Not for Recreation

I believe your article of August 24, "He Has a Drug in Mind," regarding the psychotropic drug, MDMA, presents an unintentional but potentially dangerous message to an unwary public, particularly adolescents. MDMA is already a sought-after street drug, and this article did not dispel the emerging myth about its value.

I want to draw a distinction between the responsible use of psychotropic drugs for therapeutic purposes in the hands of psychiatrists, and the illicit and irresponsible use of these drugs for recreational purposes. There is not sufficient documentation of the safety or efficacy of MDMA to imply that it

might help people. Psychiatrists have too often seen the ill effects, including death, which can follow the unrestricted or irresponsible use of potent "mind-altering" drugs, and are understandably cautious about the media "promotion" of any drug.

There are no quick fixes for the anxieties which surround us all, and MDMA is not the solution, either.

STEVEN D. TARGUM, M.D.
Medical Director
Sarasota Palms Hospital
Associate Professor of Psychiatry
University of South Florida
School of Medicine