

THIS SPECIAL creativity issue of the *MAPS Bulletin*, conceived by Sylvia Thyssen and co-edited by her and Jon Hanna, breaks important ground for MAPS. Previous issues of the *Bulletin* have reported primarily on efforts to conduct government-approved scientific research with psychedelics and marijuana. This focus has been in keeping with MAPS' mission to obtain FDA approval for the prescription use of psychedelics and marijuana for the treatment of a range of medical conditions. Yet this focus on research is rather dry. Some people have even suggested that MAPS has had remarkable success in making the discussion of psychedelics and marijuana cold, clinical, and boring. For those of you who have felt that way, this creativity issue is the antidote!

Letter from Rick Doblin, MAPS President

MAPS' research strategy builds on existing public support for the development of a full range of drugs to treat illnesses—even potential medicines such as psychedelics and marijuana (that are also used non-medically and have a potential for abuse). MAPS' strategy is based on the need to conduct objective scientific research into the medical uses of psychedelics and marijuana in order both to provide important new treatments to patients and to counter the deluge of misinformation and scare tactics that color the public debate about drugs and drug policy.

Yet most responsible users of psychedelics and marijuana do not use these drugs for well-defined medical conditions. More frequently, these drugs are used to deepen relationships or for personal growth, new ways of thinking, spiritual experiences, recreation, relaxation and—as this issue will amply demonstrate—to enhance creativity of all sorts. Creating legal contexts for these beneficial non-medical uses will require wholesale revision of our nation's drug laws, whereas approval for the medical uses of psychedelics and marijuana can be accommodated within our current legal structures (as analyzed in my recently completed dissertation).

MAPS was created as a non-profit research and educational organization, not as a political lobby working to change our nation's drug laws. Thus, MAPS' response to the evidence presented in this creativity issue is to work to sponsor government-approved research into the use of psychedelics for the enhancement of creativity. MAPS has received a \$2,500 grant from Jeremy Tarcher for protocol development for just such research. The study to be designed will, if approved, use modern research methodology to further explore the tantalizing possibilities reported in the pioneering psychedelic creativity research that was conducted in the 1950s and 1960s, research that ended prematurely due to political backlash against the non-medical use of psychedelics.

With this creativity issue, MAPS moves into even more controversial territory than usual. For while there is majority support for the medical uses of marijuana and psychedelics—if the evidence for such uses can meet the standards of proof set by FDA—there is no cultural consensus surrounding the approval of the use of psychedelics and marijuana to enhance creativity. Among the first steps in creating such a consensus is demonstrating that psychedelics and marijuana can indeed contribute to creativity, through the dissemination of personal testimonials like those found in this issue.

I'm proud to join with Sylvia and Jon in bringing to light some of the hidden sources of inspiration that readers of the *MAPS Bulletin* and contributors to this issue have personally experienced, seen at work in friends and colleagues, simply guessed at, or may be surprised to learn about. I trust you will find this issue worth a closer look, and invite you to join with MAPS in supporting efforts to use psychedelics and marijuana as tools to study the fascinating topic of creativity.

 **Rick Doblin, Ph.D., MAPS President**