

“To raise new questions, new possibilities, to regard old problems from a new angle requires a creative imagination and marks the real advances in science.” – Albert Einstein

The *MAPS Bulletin* focuses largely on reporting the small but significant steps to legitimizing the medical use of psychedelics in our society. The language of that journey is analytical, written in black on white, with careful thought to phrasing and protocol. MAPS clearly identifies with the specific values required for the testing and approval of medicinal drugs, things like methodology, following directions, adhering to accepted norms, and safety.

At the same time, the catalysts for MAPS' goals, the drugs in question, elicit multi-colored, unbridled experiences that in most cases and for most people are extremely difficult to describe in words. The psychedelic voyager comes back from a trip elated, sobered, terrified, illuminated, relaxed, perplexed, nonplussed; any of these, or all of these. The voyage is often unpredictable, the results

astonishing. Great meaning has been attributed to psychedelic experiences, and they have also been dismissed as folly or psychosis. There is an emotional charge to the idea of drug-induced inspiration; it is politically dangerous, hotly contested, vehemently denied, and strongly defended.

With this issue we considered doing a retrospective of the scientific studies that have been conducted on the topic of psychedelics and creative problem solving or artistic expression. It became clear that this approach was in a way subverting our initial intent; to bring some right-brain content to a very left-brain publication. And whereas there was too much to say about the past, there was not enough to say about the future, aside from reiterating MAPS' pledge to support

scientists interested in designing good research studies. So we turned to our readers and focused on the present.

The response to our call for submissions to this “creativity issue” were varied, and far less analytical than I had naively hoped. What we got instead was simpler and richer. The tone of some responses is well described in the words of an unattributed quotation shared with us in one letter:

“The most visible creators I know are those artists whose medium is life itself—the ones who express the inexpressible—without brush, hammer, clay or guitar. They neither paint nor sculpt. Their medium is being. They see and don't have to draw. They are the artists of being alive.”

For many years the *MAPS Bulletin* has held up as a slogan the words of a preeminent scientific mind, Albert Einstein: “Imagination is more important than knowledge.” With this simple thought we offer up the hope that human inspiration can propel us past beliefs that are fearfully defended into the realm of love and understanding that we claim as our birthright.

MAPS treads into the sanitized and sanctified world of science with strong medicine. In offering a special issue of the *MAPS Bulletin* focusing on creativity and right-brain thinking, we honor the inspiration that so many have found from their use of psychedelics.

Sylvia Thyssen, Editor



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