

MAPS/EROWID Psychedelic Bibliography Projects

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Erowid and MAPS have been collaborating on two large reference database projects recently. Erowid has been providing expertise and work developing and coordinating construction of an online MDMA Reference library and we've just begun working on doing a similar project with the Albert Hofmann Foundation's LSD and Psilocybin Library.

MDMA Reference Project

We've been working with MAPS over the last eight months to produce a comprehensive MDMA Reference Database as part of MAPS' larger project of facilitating research into the potential therapeutic benefits of MDMA and an FDA Investigative New Drug (IND) application.

We completed the first draft of the MDMA Reference Database project at the end of January, 2001, but there were a number of loose ends (including missing articles, typos, and errors) which we have been working to clear up during March & April. With help from several volunteers, we are hoping to have each entry verified and some of the difficult-to-find papers added by the end of April 2001.

There will be additional follow up work as we develop better collaborative tools, improve the search capabilities and interface, continue to seek out the missing entries, and keep the collection up to date.

Albert Hofmann Foundation Library

In 1996, the Albert Hofmann Foundation (AHF) received Albert Hofmann's collection of articles about LSD and Psilocybin. MAPS has been working for the past several years to create an online bibliography of the articles contained in this vast collection. In March, Erowid joined the project in order to evaluate whether the full texts from the collection can be digitized and included in an online database. Some of the core goals of the Albert Hofmann Foundation include preserving the early research, making it publicly accessible, and serving the interests of scholarly research. It has become clear that the best way to further those goals is to archive the work digitally and provide public access to it.

In the middle of March, four of us (Fire, Earth, Eric Oндler, and Michael Greene), spent a weekend in LA researching the Albert Hofmann Foundation's collection. Our goals were to get an understanding of the current state of the materials, determine whether it would be possible to digitize some or all

of the collection, and outline the steps, costs, and time necessary to complete the project.

The weekend was very successful. The AHF collection consists of 79 binders packed with copies of more than 4,000 journal articles, academic theses and miscellaneous writings on LSD; and 9 similar binders related to Psilocybin. The articles (over 20,000 pages worth!) seem to have been collected by Sandoz as a working reference library and don't appear to include any personal notes. With the exception of a dozen or so unique items, such as Sandoz Pharmaceuticals' shipping manifests and internal memos, most of the articles would theoretically be available through a high quality university library.

The collection itself appears to have been put together as a working reference library. The bulk of the collection is held into books with cellophane tape that is no longer sticky. Because of this original binding method many of the articles and papers have also begun to degrade.

After spending a day carefully going through the collection and consulting with Myron Stolaroff and other AHF members, it became clear that the primary value of the collection is in the information it contains and the research it represents. We made the decision to move ahead with plans to preserve the information by detaching the remaining tape, putting each article in its own plastic sleeve, then scanning and digitizing all of the articles that can easily be processed. A small number of the 'articles' are actually bound theses or booklets which will require evaluation on a case-by-case basis.

The first step in the process of creating a fully digitized, searchable database of these articles is to create a system for entering the references and verifying that the entries already in the MAPS / AHF Bibliography are correct. We've gotten a small start on this first step and should be able to have some more hands dig into the project in May. Over the summer, we're expecting to be able to coordinate volunteers to get the first stage of the project complete and get a large majority of the articles scanned and sleeved. The end date for having the entire collection available online, searchable, and viewable will hopefully be sometime in the last quarter of 2001.

We're looking forward to having this amazing resource available to the world.