

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Recent years have witnessed a widespread increase of interest in the alteration and expansion of consciousness. The discovery of the psychedelic substances such as LSD, psilocybin and mescaline has been a major contributing factor in this development. Scientists and scholars from diverse areas as well as many laymen have recognized the importance of these substances as powerful tools for the exploration of consciousness and the production of visionary experiences. The effects of psychedelic substances pose fascinating problems for medical and psychological research and have far-reaching implications for many issues in the sciences and the humanities.

The Psychedelic Review is designed to serve as a forum for the exchange of information and ideas about these issues. It will publish original research reports, scholarly and historical essays, outstanding phenomenological accounts of spontaneous or induced transcendent experiences, and reviews of relevant pharmacological and other literature.

The journal is published and sponsored by the International Federation for Internal Freedom (IFIF), an organization whose purpose is "to encourage, support and protect research on psychedelic substances." The basic long-range goal of IFIF is to work to increase the individual's control over his own mind, thereby enlarging his internal freedom. The present journal is an attempt to contribute to the realization of this long-term objective.

However, the views expressed in articles published by *The Psychedelic Review* are solely the authors' and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editors or of IFIF. Conversely, the contributors do not necessarily subscribe to the principles and purposes of IFIF.

A word about the title. The substances discussed here have been referred to by many different names, including "psychotomimetic," "hallucinogenic," "consciousness-expanding" and others. The term "psychedelic," first proposed by Humphrey Osmond, is derived from the Greek and means "mind-manifesting." Strict compliance with linguistic protocol would have dictated the usual intervening vowel (o), but the present orthography is gaining wider acceptance.

"Can This Drug Enlarge Man's Mind?"

Narcotics numb it. Alcohol unsettles it.

Now a new chemical called LSD has emerged with phenomenal powers of intensifying and changing it — whether for good or ill is a subject of hot debate.

GERALD HEARD

Since earliest times man has felt impulses to rise above his everyday self and achieve either some higher insight or some release from mundane concerns — or both. Western saints and Eastern mystics have subjected themselves to strenuous spiritual exercises; others, less dedicated, have resorted to chemical aids, from the ceremonial wine of the ancients and the opiates of the Orient to the sacramental peyotl plant of Aztec tribes and the social stimulants of our own day.

In our time, moreover, psychologists and other students of human perceptions, from William James to Aldous Huxley, have tried out on themselves certain experimental drugs in an effort to induce states that would lend extraordinary lucidity and light to the mind's unconscious and creative processes — possibly even assistance to these. Today these newer drugs — mescaline, psilocybin, and the latest and most potent of them, Lysergic Acid Diethylamide, or LSD — are spreading so widely on a "research" basis that major questions are arising as to their effects and proper use.

Their enemies call them "mind-distorting" drugs, and warn that their therapeutic values are unproven, that they may upset even a normal person, and that they are already being abused for "kicks." Their proponents prefer to call them "consciousness-changing" agents, and argue that in selected cases, for individuals of strong mental and creative powers, LSD may widen their window on the world and on themselves as well. On the evidence so far, both sides seem agreed that LSD is not habit-forming; numerous takers of it report that the experience is a strenuous and exhausting one, to be repeated only after much thought.

Should man in any case put such a potentially dangerous substance into his system? It is claimed for LSD that it is far less toxic

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than alcohol, tobacco, or caffeine. At the same time one of its leading students and advocates, Dr. Sidney Cohen remarks: "It is quite possible that LSD attracts certain unstable individuals in their search for some magical intervention." Can trance-like insight produced by chemicals be the source of higher wisdom and creativity, like a kind of Instant Zen? This remains unproven — especially since so many persons coming back from LSD can describe their experience only as indescribable.

One of those who can describe it best is the writer of the following article, the distinguished philosopher Gerald Heard, author of *The Eternal Gospel*, *The Doppelgangers*, *Is God in History?*, and other books, and a leading student of psychic research.

What will men of the future consider the greatest achievements of our time? Releasing hydrogen energy? Putting a man on the moon? Extending the average human life to a century or more?

Last year Dr. Glenn T. Seaborg, Chairman of the United States Atomic Energy Commission, gave his forecast of what he thought might be our most revolutionary discoveries or advances in the next generation. Addressing the graduating class of Northern Michigan College in his home state, he asked his listeners to project themselves forward to their thirtieth reunion in 1992, and selected fifteen items on which to speculate. Fourteen of these — ranging from the realizing of space communications to capturing solar energy and the remaking of daily life by electronic computers — dealt with physical advances, and thus with the same objective that Francis Bacon had put before the pristine scientists of ten generations ago: "the relief of man's estate." The fifteenth, however, would not have occurred to Elizabethan England's "wide-browed Verulam," or indeed to any researcher until the last dozen years.

"Pharmaceuticals that change and maintain human personality at any desired level," was Dr. Seaborg's definition of this major new possibility of power — and, he was quick to add, of potential danger too. He was thinking of such recently introduced drugs as mescaline, psilocybin, and no doubt particularly of the phenomenal one known as LSD, about the uses of which much controversy is raging today. Of them he went on to say: "It may . . . become necessary to establish new legal and moral codes to govern those who prescribe use of these materials. Who should prescribe . . . and under what conditions, such a drug to a person in a position of high authority when he is faced with decisions of great consequence?"

Of course man has had mood-changing drugs at his disposal for millennia. First came alcohol, the great relaxant; then opium, the painkiller; then caffeine, the spur of the nervous system; then cocaine, hashish, and a score of other less common vegetable extracts. And in the last few years a wide variety of tranquilizers has been developed.

They all, however, fall into one or the other of two classes. They either weaken the mind's common-sense grasp of things, as does alcohol or opium, or they strengthen that grip, as does coffee or dexedrine. They do not leave the mind unclouded and yet at the same time permit it to view things in quite an uncommon-sensical way. They do not raise the mind to high lucidity and yet at the same time make the world it views appear fraught with an intensity of significance that everyday common sense cannot perceive.

In LSD, or Lysergic Acid Diethylamide, however, a drug now exists that can accomplish all these aims. As Dr. Seaborg and several medical authorities cited in these pages emphasize, it is certainly not to be taken lightly, and research has only begun on its possibilities as a therapeutic aid in psychiatry. For many who have taken it under proper, controlled conditions, it has brought about an astonishing enlargement of sensitivity and perceptiveness, and it may thus cast new light on the wellsprings of creativity.

If you ask, Of what possible use is such a drug? or, What is the difference between the effects of taking LSD and, say, hashish in a Tangier dive or opium in Hong Kong? the answer might be given in terms of an early Franciscan, the ex-lawyer Jacoponi da Todi, when asked the same "what's the use" question after he spoke of the exhilarating effect that joining Saint Francis's company had on him. His response was, "a better order in all my living."

Not an opiate or a narcotic, LSD is a chemical able to produce profound changes of consciousness which, in healthily constituted persons, seem to leave no untoward aftereffects. And while it can give an ecstatic experience, at the same time it lends an extraordinary intensity of attention.

You see and hear this world, but as the artist and the musician sees and hears. And, much more important, it may also give far-reaching insights into one's own self and into one's relationship with others. Some takers of it have even felt that they had won an insight into the "nature of the Universe and the purpose of Life." These insights can be remembered and, if the person wishes, can be incorporated into his or her everyday living to bring it a "better order."

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So here may be a major breakthrough that meets the problem of letting in a free flow of comprehension beyond the everyday threshold of experience while keeping the mind clear. And this seems to be accomplished by a confronting of one's self, a standing outside one's self, a dissolution of the ego-based apprehensions that cloud the sky of the mind.

The drug was discovered by accident in 1943. Dr. Albert Hofmann of Sandoz Ltd. in Switzerland, while doing research with derivatives of the ergot alkaloids, somehow absorbed synthesized LSD into his system and found it to have surprising effects on consciousness. It was soon recognized as the most potent and reliable of the consciousness-changing drugs. A remarkable fact about it is the extreme minuteness of the effective dose. The optimum dosage — that which produces for the subject the most informative results — lies between 100 and 150 "gamma"; and 100 "gamma" is approximately one ten-thousandth of a gram. (Mescaline, another of the "consciousness-changers," has to be taken in a dosage four thousand times that of LSD to produce similar mental results, and in this amount it does have physical effects on most subjects — sometimes unpleasant ones.)

A good psychiatrist, of course, must be the overseer of all LSD research. He must, as did the physicians who trained the volunteers for the ascent of Mount Everest, have "vetted" the subject. He must know whether this or that particular psyche is likely to function satisfactorily at these rare altitudes. Then, a person intimately acquainted with LSD should be at the side of the subject as he embarks on his journey. It should not be undertaken alone. A companion should be on call to act as an assistant — for instance, to play music, change the lighting, answer any questions, or write down any remarks the subject should wish recorded — and also as a monitor, or night watchman, so to speak, ready to report if possible trouble may be lurking ahead (in which case the voyage can be called off instantly by administering a counteracting chemical).

So, though the subject should not be intruded upon, he should not be left figuratively or literally in the dark. The optimal circumstances are simple, though contrary to present clinical and laboratory protocol. For the ideal setting is not a hospital or research lab, but rather an environment that is neither aggressive nor austere, and in which he may feel at home, perhaps a quiet house surrounded by a garden.

The first stage under LSD is surprising in a paradoxical way.

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From what he has learned about this research, the subject is of course expecting a surprise. But during the first hour after swallowing the tiny pills, he usually experiences nothing at all. He may feel some relief at finding himself remaining completely normal, and perhaps a secret sense of superiority at the thought that possibly he is too strong to give in to a drug that will take him away from reality. An uncommonly able businessman, the head of a major corporation, who had much wished to take LSD, in fact waited fully three and one-half hours for something to "happen." Although it is uncommon for LSD to be so long in taking effect, the occasions on which this has occurred have led some researchers to speculate that the onset of the experience can be held at bay for an extra hour or two by the subject's unconscious nervousness or his suspicion that he might have been given nothing more than an innocuous placebo.

Yet as the first hour wears away, quite a number of subjects become convinced that they are feeling odd. Some, like the witches of *Macbeth*, feel a pricking in their thumbs. Others — and this, too, is a common reaction to the weird, the uncanny, the "numinous" — feel chill, with that tightening, or horripilation, of the skin as, in the vernacular, "a goose goes over one's grave." They report, "I am trembling" — but, putting out their hands, find them steady.

In the second hour, however, most subjects enter upon a stage which can leave no doubt that a profound change of consciousness is occurring. For one thing, the attending psychiatrist, or "sitter," can see that the pupils of the subject's eyes are now nearly always dilated. This symptom is the first and often the only undeniable and visible physical effect of LSD, and it gives the physiologist almost his only clue as to which area of the brain is now being acted upon. For the center that controls the pupils' reaction to light is known, and it lies deep.

During this second hour we can say that the subject is "gaining altitude." How does he record this heightening of consciousness? By far the most common remark refers to the growing intensification of color. Flowers, leaves, grass, trees, are seen with tremendous vividness — "with the intensity that Van Gogh must have seen them," is an often-used description. They seem to pulse and breathe; in fact, even everyday, fixed objects around the room may take on "flowing," "waving" shapes, as if invested with some life force of their own. Intensification of sounds, too (such as the singing of birds, though far away), is often commented on with fascinated surprise. Music frequently becomes an absorbing delight even to the nonmusical —

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while to the musical it has on occasion become almost unbearably intense. "Under LSD I asked that my favorite recording of my favorite Beethoven quartet (Opus 135) be played," one musical taker reported; "but after a few minutes I had it turned off. Its emotions had become too searing — and besides, I had suddenly made the discovery that one of the instruments was playing ever so slightly off pitch."

Another effect is stranger and deeper. The subject feels that time itself — time urgent, pressing, hurried, or contrariwise, time slack, lagging, heavy on his hands — is now in "right time." When he discovers what an ample store of un hastened attention he can give to all the rich content brought him by eye and ear, he finds it hard not to believe that somehow time has been stretched. But a glance at his watch tells him it is a new-given power of superattention that is allowing him to make such full use of every moment.

It is, however, in the next couple of hours that for most people the full power of the experience comes over them. Till then, however absorbed, the subject has still been an observer. Now, although sights and sounds, the artistic splendor of the world, and the magic of music may still amaze him, they are, as it were, the décor, the scenery of a drama. Now the whole outside world becomes a composition that embraces and interfuses everything. And yet this composition, though constantly changing, is also (strange paradox) all the while complete and instant in a fathomless peace. At this point one could say that he crosses a watershed. In this all-pervading Energy he feels around him, the subject realizes that he cannot be isolated. It is flowing through him, as it flows through all that surrounds him.

Here his experience with time goes still further. Time appears to have stopped, disappeared. What has now befallen the "voyager" is not merely that he is on the high seas with his ship in a vast calm, but that the ship itself no longer seems distinct from the infinite ocean. He stands outside of and apart from his familiar ego, all its protective barriers having been shed; and this can lead in some to transcendent experience, while in others to a deep panic. To those for whom their ego is their only possible self, the only possible mode of consciousness, its disappearance is a kind of death.

It is here that the subject, however independent-minded, may literally welcome a helping hand. Of all the senses, touch is naturally most firmly anchored in the material world. So it is the least liable to illusions. It has been found that if at the moment of this "trans-

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valuation of all values," this double change of the view of one's self and one's view of nature, a hand is actually held out to the subject, he will be able to keep his bearings. If the subject uses this simple "sea anchor," he may discover that he is not merely "riding the swell" but has entered a condition of what until then may have been inconceivable. With his consciousness enlarged out of all bounds, he may — if all goes well — find that he no longer feels anxiety about past or future.

It is not that he has gone into amnesia. He can clearly recall past concerns and future appointments; but he recalls them as a wise guardian carries in his mind the affairs of his ward. His personal appetites, meanwhile, generally become suspended. Most people never eat or drink during the experience, though it may last a full day; even constant smokers, while they may start with a cigarette, put it down as soon as they begin to "climb." There is not the slightest repugnance to food and drink. It is simply that the subject feels the appetites are irrelevant. Any sexual sensation, any erotic fantasy or preoccupation, is nearly always reported as absent. So, for all its liberating powers, LSD remains noneuphoric: as the Greeks would say, it is "eudaemonic" — "a possession by the spirit of wholeness."

After these climactic hours, during which he may either have sat still and wordless while contemplating the myriad images borne in on him, or conveyed volubly to his companion or monitor what he has seen and felt, the voyager returns gradually to shore, sometimes dipping back into the tides of the far sea until the lingering powers of the chemical disperse.

In the *Odyssey* Penelope, the first hostess in recorded history, gives what one might call the first psychoanalytic interpretation of a dream. The returning Ulysses, appearing in disguise and keeping his identity concealed from her after his ten years' absence, questions her about a dream she has had concerning the fate of her exigent suitors. She answers:

*Many and many a dream is mere confusion,
a cobweb of no consequence at all.
Two Gates for ghostly dreams there are: one gateway
of honest horn, and one of ivory.
Issuing by the ivory gate are dreams
of glimmering illusion, fantasies,
but those that come through solid polished horn
may be borne out, if mortals only know them.*

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*I doubt it came by horn, my fearful dream —
too good to be true, that, for my son and me.*

What Penelope is saying is that there are two categories, or channels, of subconscious insight: one, coming in through the "Gate of Horn," of things that "may be borne out" (that is, having to do with events, both present and future, in our actual lives) and the other, through the "Gate of Ivory," of apparently the sheerest fantasy. And it is certainly recognized by all students of psychical research that there is a deep current of the mind which brings to the surface (sometimes by way of dreams, but not necessarily always) raw data — an incoherent babbling, irresponsible glossolalia, sufficiently confusing to justify the epithet "glimmering illusion, fantasies." Clues as to this second traffic, when they do appear, are ambiguous; symbols are so fractured that for a long while they are quite unrecognizable.

Here lies one reason why many decades of modern psychical research into this anomalous traffic have produced such baffling and frustrating results. Another is that whereas the flow running through Penelope's "Gate of Horn" is as constant and copious as the daily tides, the springs that feed the "Gate of Ivory" seem sporadic and indeed capricious. No wonder then that psychoanalysis, which confines itself to the masses of sea wrack brought up through the "Gate of Horn" and stranded on the beaches of our waking mind, attracts such an army of deep-sea psychobiologists, while those who wait by the other water gate have but a few minnows to show after nearly three generations of research.

Psychoanalysis is concerned mainly with man's conflicts between his sexual urges and the taboos imposed upon him by society, and with the effects of these conflicts on his everyday living. But the traffic we associate with the "Gate of Ivory" deals with data apparently belonging to those higher registers of the mind which very few researchers outside the psychical field have even noticed. It is true that mystics and saints have reported, time and again, "out-of-this-world," indescribable experiences that did change their lives and bring a "better order" in their living. But these experiences came as the result of many years of severe mental and physical discipline carried out within a doctrinal frame of reference, which often brought them to the brink of insanity. For many the experience was only a brief flash. For some it came two or three times during a lifetime of discipline. For instance Plotinus, so his biographer and disciple Porphyry tells us, only three times in his long life of striving for it attained to "the state." But until now there has been no other way

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of opening up this other passage of perception, of keeping it open for any length of time, or of doing it at will. How is this free flow of findings to be obtained?

We now recognize that our minds have, as oculists say of our eyes, not one but a number of focal lengths. The aperture of our understanding alters, in the way that we alter the aperture of our telescopes and microscopes to bring objects into clear focus at specific ranges. But, though our minds do shift, though our range of perception will at times change gear, we cannot make that shift deliberately, consciously. Nor when it occurs can we hold on to it. And when the most common, as well as the most profound shift — that from waking to sleeping — takes place, we are not able to observe it as we experience it. This problem has teased psychologists for sixty years, and the greatest of them, William James, saw that if it was to be solved, the experimenter must use psychophysical means on himself. He tried nitrous oxide as a means of enlarging consciousness, only to find that at a certain point communication ceased, and he came back murmuring, "The Universe has no opposite." Then he tried peyotl, the button cactus that grows along the Rio Grande and is used in the religious rites of Indians in the Southwest as a sacrament lending lucidity — only to be daunted by the stumbling block of severe nausea.

Leave chemicals aside for the moment. There is an "other" state of mind, known to and described by poets as well as higher mathematicians and other scientific geniuses, in which a deeply "insightful" process can take place. The current president of India, the philosopher Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, has termed this process "integral thought" as against "analytic thought" — the latter being the inductive procedure whereby through the patient gathering, analysis, and arranging of data there would at last emerge a general "law." "Integral thought" is the art of the sudden insight, the brilliant hypothesis, the truly "creative" leap. To have truly original thought the mind must throw off its critical guard, its filtering censor. It must put itself into a state of depersonalization; and from such histories as Jacques Hadamard's *The Psychology of Invention in the Mathematical Field* we know that the best researchers, when confronting problems and riddles that had defied all solution by ordinary methods, did employ their minds in an unusual way, did put themselves into a state of egoless "creativity" which permitted them to have insights so remarkable that by means of these they were able to make their greatest and most original discoveries.

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Paracelsus found that there was a "ledge of the mind," free of all caution, to which wine could lift him; there, though unable to hold a pen, he could still dictate, until intoxication swept him into speechlessness. Descartes, sleeping on the floor with writing paper beside him, scrawled down the insights that flashed across his mind in a half-waking state, when the creative and critical levels of his brain were both working. Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation of the blood, told his biographer Aubrey that if he stayed in a disused coal shaft in total dark and silence, his uninterrupted mind would reach a span it could not encompass above ground, when trying to "think regardless of consequence" amid the wary, hostile medical world of his day. Henri Poincaré, the great French mathematician, described his subliminal processes of discovery in these words: "It is certain that the combinations which present themselves to the mind in a kind of sudden illumination after a somewhat prolonged period of unconscious work are generally useful and fruitful. . . . This, too, is most mysterious. How can we explain the fact that, of the thousand products of our unconscious activity, some are invited to cross the threshold, while others remain outside?" (In his classic study of poetic creation, *The Road to Xanadu*, John Livingston Lowes cited this passage as bearing on the deep movements of Coleridge's own psyche.)

Can LSD provide any assistance to the creative process? Even when given under the best of conditions, it may do no more (as Aristotle said when appraising and approving the great Greek Mysteries) than "give an experience." Thereafter the subject must himself work with this enlarged frame of reference, this creative *schema*. If he will not, the experience remains a beautiful anomaly, a gradually fading wonder — fading because it has no relevance to "the life of quiet desperation" which Thoreau saw most of us living and which we cannot help but live.

What, then, should be done about it? LSD is certainly one of the least toxic chemicals man has ever put inside his system. Compared with alcohol, nicotine, coffee — our three great stand-bys — it could be called almost a docile mare as against these mettlesome stallions, so far as most people are concerned. Is it of any use with psychotics? Most researchers doubt it. With the extreme neurotic? Again there seems to be considerable question. Although among these categories LSD appears to do no physical harm, cases of severe adverse psychological effects have been reported. It is the unique quality of *attention* which LSD can bestow that will or will not be

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of benefit. Intensity of attention is what all talented people must obtain or command if they are to exercise their talent. Absolute attention — as we know from, for example, Isaac Newton's and Johann Sebastian Bach's descriptions of the state of mind in which they worked — is the most evident mark of genius functioning. On the other hand, the masterful Sigmund Freud remarked that psychoanalysis, even when exercised by himself, would not work with the extreme neurotic because of the hypertrophied ego-attention which such a patient had sacrificed his life to build up. The psychotic is even more absorbed in his distortive, self-obsessed notion of reality. Give, then, either of these victims of their own egos still greater capacity to attend, and it is highly unlikely that they will do other than dig still more deeply the ditch of their delusion and build more stubbornly the wall of their self-inflicted prison.

But for the truly creative person (and I refer specifically to that person capable of exercising "integral thought") LSD may be of some use. It could help him to exercise integral thought with greater ease and facility, and at will. And for a number of sensitive people willing to present themselves for a serious experiment in depth, LSD has shown itself of some help in permeating the ego, in resolving emotional conflicts, and in reducing those basic fears, the ultimate of which is the fear of death. However, the practical answer to What should be done about it? seems to be that LSD remain for the time being what it is: a "research drug," to be used with greatest care to explore the minds of those who would volunteer to aid competent researchers by offering themselves as voyagers to the "Gate of Ivory."