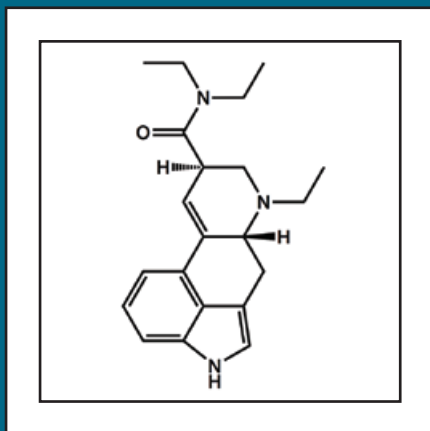
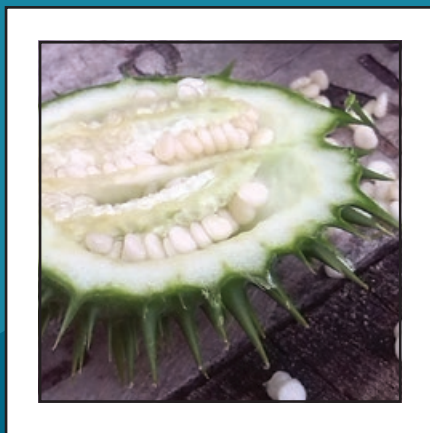
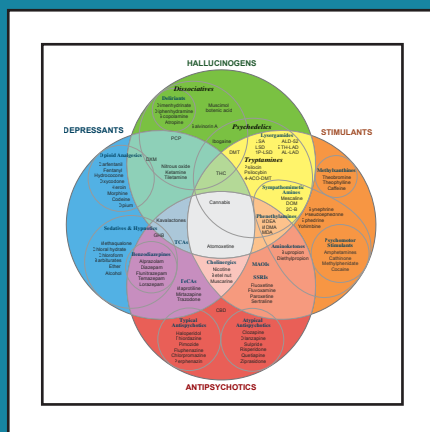
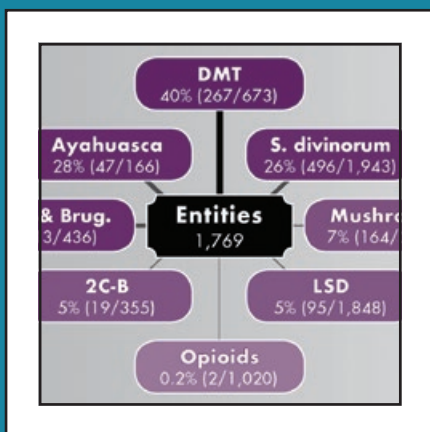


Erowid Extracts

DOCUMENTING THE COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HUMANS AND PSYCHOACTIVES

August 2018

Number 30



112,185
Experience
Reports
(and counting!)

23 Years of Experiences • Psychoactive Zeitgeist • Mountains of Experience: The Process...
A Dive into Datura • An Eye on Ayahuasca • Novel Drug Briefs • What's Like What?

I have the utmost respect for you guys. The information you provide is so very helpful for the development of the growing human consciousness and social stigma around drugs.

— J.D.
September Drive Donor

[T]here are many of us out here who depend on your continued provision of common sense-based and scientific literature for an academic, rational defense of the use of psychedelics. I'm not a scientist, but I hope with my documentation of a non-hecktic and healthy incorporation of psychedelics into daily life that I might win over some hearts and minds. [...] I have been reading Erowid since I was a teenager in the early 2000s, trying to find some community and commonality in my desire and love for the enlightening and therapeutic values of the psychedelic experience.

— P.
Email to Erowid

I appreciate what you do! I work in the addictions field and you are there when there are insufficient peer-reviewed studies to check stuff out. Thanks.

— P.C.
September Drive Donor

Your website has allowed me to research and decide which drugs would be right for me. I learned how to be safe, how to choose the correct dosage, and everything. If not for Erowid, I could be strung out on the pain pills or cocaine that "friends" of mine offered to me. Instead, I have safely gotten the chance to explore my consciousness through psychedelics.

— H.P.
Email to Erowid

Thank you for the brilliant work you do.

— M.C.
September Drive Donor

For crucial research assistance along the way, as well as their indispensable online library, I'm deeply grateful to Earth and Fire, the proprietors of Erowid, which is the single most important resource on psychedelics there is. Check it out.

— MICHAEL POLLAN
*in the Acknowledgments of
How to Change Your Mind (2018)*

Your site helped me through the metaphoric minefield that is teenage experimentation. One of the things that has been killing people off in record numbers lately is heroin. [...] I have seen kids as young as 14 strung out like the laundry. I believe that people will do what they want regardless of laws, and even common sense often times. The best we can do is provide the knowledge to do it safely. I was strung out... OK, so I am strung out. But I have learned to manage my addiction and minimize damage. Rule number one: no needles. Even black tar heroin can be easily prepared for insufflation.

— C.W.
Submission to Erowid

My appreciation to Erowid for letting testimonials such as this be posted in a public vault. We need to learn from each other and share in ways far superior than the DARE or Just Say No approaches. I've always preached that drug use isn't necessarily drug abuse. Some "drug" experiences (especially with entheogens) are good for us. This one was not.

— BYRD
Experience Report 105176

As a former chemist I know how corporate America has destroyed the brilliant subject of chemistry and perverted it to capitalise on the weak and poor by disempowering them and stealing their will through a systematic poisoning, first of the belly, then of the spirit and finally distorting the mind. Carry on my good friends.

— A.
Contributor from Canada

I first stumbled upon Erowid over a decade ago, and immediately became a fan of the organization and the website. The plethora of psychoactives and their combinations, many of which are unknown in the 'main-stream' drug culture, are explored in depth. This is further reinforced by the peer-volunteer-edited and submitted experience reports. Erowid does wonders in offering a non-biased, scientific, as well as personal catalog that I'd say more than adequately provides readers with accessible knowledge that can only result in a better understanding of psychoactives, which in turn helps spur harm reduction.

— THOMAS74
GreatNonprofits

Just reading the experiences is a delight in itself. I have come across some beautiful prose. Reading from other people's experiences can gain you insights.

— ANTON N.
GreatNonprofits

Eventually I want to primarily represent people accused of distributing research chemicals. I am also interested in the changing trends in cutting agents for traditional drugs. Anything I can do to help this site would be great. By the way, I was at a seminar for Connecticut Defense Lawyers and Erowid.org was mentioned as a great source, especially the experience reports. That was actually said by the head of the drug identification lab in Connecticut, a victory for all of us.

— D.S.
Erowid Volunteer

Send correspondence to:
extracts@erowid.org

Please include a name, title, and city/state/country of origin to be published with your letter. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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Erowid Center's mission is to provide and facilitate access to objective, accurate, and non-judgmental information about plants, chemicals, technologies, and related issues that affect the mind, body, and culture. Erowid Center supports and trains libraries, publishers, and other information distributors on issues related to these fields.

It is also Erowid Center's goal to support medical, legal, scientific, academic, and independent experts in developing and publishing related resources.

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Erowid Extracts

Number 30, August 2018

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Know Your Body
Know Your Mind
Know Your Substance
Know Your Source

23 Years of Experience

Personal experiences form the foundation of humanity's understanding of psychoactive plants, chemicals, technologies, and practices. It's not medical personnel or carefully-formulated scientific research that has contributed the most to filling in the data space, it's first-person stories.

Unparalleled in scope and size, Erowid's Experience Vaults have surpassed our own relatively ambitious initial goals. Researchers, educators, medical specialists, and the general public consult our collection, and reports are read by tens of thousands of people every day.

We Can't Deny the Experiences of Others.

Why Collect Experience Reports?

When first developing Erowid, we were stunned by how inadequate the available information and wisdom were for helping young adults make rational decisions. There were just too few first-hand descriptions of the effects of psychedelics and other recreational drugs. Indeed, for most substances, there were practically no findable first-person reports of effects. We were not only curious about the details of the experiences, but also what people thought about their use decades

later. It took us years to realize that one of the most effective methods for evolving humanity's understanding of these issues was to pull together and curate a large collection of independent voices describing people's visceral, cognitive, and reflective experiences.

The dozens of books that had been published about psychedelic experiences weren't

widely available (interlibrary loan, anyone?) and were often skewed towards positive experiences by highly educated people. Certain authors, like Timothy Leary, were encumbered by sociocultural agendas that may have biased their writings. And the noise from "anti-drug" sources and childish just-say-no educational programs combined to make it nearly impossible to tell fact from fiction, or science from stoned rant.

Then, the mid-1990s saw the publication of the Shulgins' influential *PiHKAL* and its short experience blurbs, concurrent with a rapid expansion of internet access for college students and geeks. Communities formed in new and revolutionary ways around previously marginalized topics.

The Early Menagerie

Some of the first documents on Erowid.org were descriptions of the use of psychoactive plants and chemicals, written by people we knew through online psychedelic communities. Those reports were useful, but we were acutely aware that they were hand-selected and it was inappropriate to extrapolate too broadly from them. More were needed.

For a few years, we primarily solicited reports from colleagues, friends, and online acquaintances. We communicated extensively with people in person, via IRC (online chat), and by email, encouraging them to write reports. Many of the best early reports came from dedicated psychonauts who helped develop the standards for writing styles and formats that are now the benchmarks for useful experience records.

Experience is Science

Most approved human experiments with psychoactive drugs include mandatory metrics like heart rate and blood pressure, and an increasing number include brain scans, but the fundamental way that scientific studies document the effects of these substances is to ask the participants how they feel. Over Erowid's 23 years, we've consulted on the design of several experimental studies, dozens of surveys, and many analyses of the effects of psychoactive drugs.



Experience Reports

In the late 1990s we played a small role in developing the research that eventually became the Johns Hopkins psilocybin experiments. We also discussed MDMA research protocols carried out by colleagues in San Francisco and worked briefly with MAPS in developing their first MDMA human-subject research proposal to the FDA. Those projects gave us the opportunity to consider the existing scientific metrics for psychoactivity in 2000.

It became clear to us that we humans are at an early stage in our understanding of mind and consciousness alteration and how to measure or record psychoactivity. The primary “instruments” (as survey-like sets of questions are called in the scientific literature) were surprisingly blunt. After our years of exploring existing instruments and surveys, we decided to design the Experience Vaults system to collect open-text narratives rather than narrow questions with multiple-choice answers.

The Design

In 1998, we moved from informally collecting reports to inviting submissions via a lightly structured web form. We manually HTML'd each report for display. The best reports continued to come in via email, but the web form encouraged a greater breadth of voices.

Then, in late 1999, at a Friday Night Dinner at a woodsy hillside home in Larkspur, California, our friend Bob Wallace suggested that we create a database-backed system to manage experience reports. He was both an informed drug geek and a generous donor. Over wine and snacks, we discussed the vision for a systematized submission and review process.

We worked on a data model, user interface, and review process in April 2000, then worked through May and June to implement the system. We trained a dozen people to review and publish these texts, and sent out the invitation for new submissions. At the time of launch, we imported about 600 experience reports we had previously published as well as a stash of 1,700 unreviewed reports that had been submitted through the earlier web form.

By the end of the year, we had published another thousand reports. From 600 in the first five years to 1,000 in six months, the new system was a big success.

Since 2000, we've published an average of more than 1,700 per year.

The Collection Today

Erowid's Experience Vaults have become the largest and most valuable collection of its kind, forming part of the global substrate of knowledge evolution about psychoactive plants, drugs, practices, and technologies. Today, the dataset is cited, analyzed, mapped, graphed, and discussed by cross-disciplinary publications small and large.

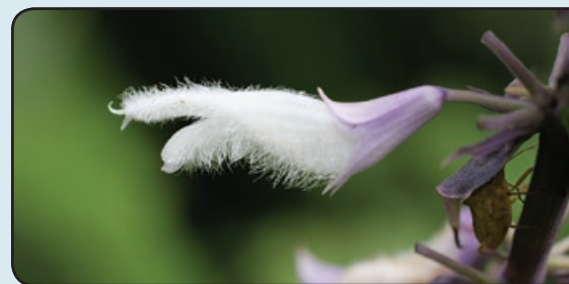
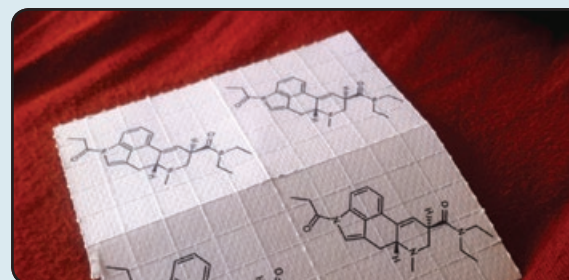
Experience is the Basis of Knowledge.

The Future

The Experience Vaults are one of Erowid's most successful projects. Starting with just a handful of informally gathered reports in the mid 1990s, we now have more than 112,000 in the collection, of which over 32,000 have been published.

It's amazing how far access to information about psychoactives has come since the mid-1990s and we're pleased with the role that Erowid has played in these global improvements.

As we look back at 23 years of collecting experiences, we're also moving forward with new goals for improving the quality of the collection and its value to academics, researchers, and most importantly, individuals. We're documenting and reviewing experiences one-by-one for the long-term historical record and to benefit people's lives. ○



High-Dose Ecstasy Tablets

Tablets containing 250–330 mg of MDMA are sold in the UK, Europe, and possibly the US. This is up to three times higher than a common dose.
(2018)

Access to Lab Drug Checking

Erowid's EcstasyData/DrugsData is the largest public lab drug-checking project in North America. In the past year we've analyzed 432 samples and published 441 results from other organizations.
(Jul 2018)

Pollan-Palooza

Michael Pollan's book about psychedelics, *How to Change Your Mind*, hits #1 on The New York Times Best-Seller List. His mention of Erowid in the Acknowledgments is touching.
(Jun 2018)

Psychedelics: Cure or Scourge?

The mainstream news media maintains a split view of psychedelics, equally presenting them as medical miracles and as a continuing threat.
(2018)

The Era of Psychedelic Conferences

Dozens, if not hundreds, of psychedelic-related events are held each year around the world. What a change from 20 years ago!
(2018)

DEA Microgram Archives

Erowid is publishing restricted issues of the DEA's *Microgram Bulletin* from the 1960s and '70s, providing insight into law enforcement and drug culture of the time.
(May 2016–Present)

Fruit

We love Pine(apples).
(Jan–Mar 2018)

Collection Archiving

Work on the archiving of two important collections of papers is ongoing at Erowid. Abstracts are being written for all documents in the Stolaroff Collection, and scanning of the Shulgin Collection is progressing.
(Jul 2018)

Depression Treatment

The first placebo-controlled study into the use of ayahuasca in treatment-resistant depression is published. It joins several other psychedelics showing promise in this area.
(Jun 2018)

Incr-Edibly Potent

Oral cannabis and cannabinoid products (THC candies, cookies, etc.) continue to send many to the hospital with confusion, nausea, increased heart rate, and paranoia. Route of administration matters.
(Jul 2018)

Microdosing: Hip or Hype?

The idea that *many* people microdose with LSD and psilocybin mushrooms continues to get a surprising amount of attention from the media. Is it as prevalent as reported? Only time will tell.
(2018)

Synthetic Cannabinoids Spread

The list of new synthetic cannabinoids keeps growing. Sometimes sold as other drugs or in products lacking content labeling. A few products have been laced with the poison brodifacoum, resulting in severe bleeding and four deaths.
(Mar–Jul 2018)

Heroin Laced with Fentanyl/Carfentanil

Heroin is increasingly seen laced with potent opioids like fentanyl and the novel psychoactive substances carfentanil, furanyl fentanyl, and benzyl fentanyl, leading to more overdoses.
(Jun 2018)

US Moves To Add New Schedule A

Attempting to control novel psychoactives, the US House passes a bill to create a “Schedule A” for any analog of a Schedule I or II drug. The Attorney General would have authority to ban substances with relative ease. Possession wouldn’t be illegal. Seems to ignore lessons learned from prohibition.
(Jun 2018)

Ketamine Tales

Ketamine use in emergency response settings as a treatment for pain increases. Disturbingly, police in Minnesota take this as license to request that EMTs “chemically restrain” suspects with ketamine.
(Jun 2018)

Kratom Battles

Media, harm reduction workers, and policymakers continue to spar over whether kratom is a promising tool in reducing opioid addiction or a dangerously addictive drug.
(2018)

Harm Reduction Activism Award

A coalition of organizations, including Erowid, gives the first Prometheus Award for Harm Reduction Activism to Hannah Procell, a college student disciplined for providing a chill room offering peer support during a school-approved party.
(Jun 2018)

Psychedelic Social Clubs

There is a growing trend of local psychedelic clubs and societies in many countries. Dozens of such groups host lectures, meet-ups, and discussions among interested people.
(2018)

Prison Transformed into Cannabinoid Extraction Facility

Damian Marley buys a vacant prison in a small California town and converts it into a cannabis cultivation and oil extraction facility.
(Feb 2018)

Medical Marijuana in Europe

With only a few exceptions (Andorra, Estonia, Luxembourg, Monaco, and San Marino), access to medical cannabis has spread across Europe.
(2018)

Don't Forget—Blotter Isn't Always LSD

Blotter containing a chemical other than LSD (1P-LSD, NBOMes, ultra-potent opioids, DOB/DOC) isn't uncommon. Hofmann “1943 Bicycle Ride” blotter containing carfentanil? Fucking wrong!
(2016–2018)

Cannabis in Canada

Canada legalizes possession, home growing, and sales of recreational cannabis nationwide. Must be over 18, a maximum of four plants cultivated per household, and vendors must be licensed.
(Jun 2018)

Mushroom Mistake

Young man picks edible morel mushrooms and posts photos on Facebook. A cop shows up at his door and threatens arrest, assuming they're illegal. Ill-informed law enforcement officers should not browse social media looking for mushroom crimes!
(Jun 2018)

Nick Sand

Psychedelic chemist, elder, and friend Nick Sand dies. Along with other psychedelics, Nick may have produced more LSD than anyone in history, having specialized in super-efficient, large-scale production. His trickster smile is missed.
(Apr 2017)

Dale Pendell

Psychedelic poet, ethnobotanist, and friend Dale Pendell dies. Dale's epic *Pharmako*-trilogy of books melds botany, culture, history, poetry, art, and science in an engaging and crafty way. We miss his thoughtful and kind presence.
(Jan 2018)

Tweakin' Tweakin' Off That 2C-B

Rapper-songwriter Kanye West namechecks 2C-B and DMT in a song on his album *Ye*, which reaches #1 on the Billboard 200.
(Jun 2018)

Major LSD Bust in EU

Officials report seizing 800,000 doses of LSD along with millions in cryptocurrencies during a raid on houses in Spain and Austria linked to darkweb sales.
(Jun 2018)

Mountains of Experience

The process of reviewing 112,000 first-person reports about the use of psychoactives

by Fire Erowid, Sylvia Thyssen, and Earth Erowid

Photo by Warren Krupshaw

First-hand reports of experiences vary from great to terrible and from potentially life-saving to recklessly dangerous. Most fall somewhere in between. With more than 112,000 reports submitted over the past 20 years, we have developed complex systems to publish, sort, review, maintain, and improve Erowid’s collection.

SUBMISSIONS

Currently, most reports are submitted through our simple web form, which asks for the following information: author name, body weight, age at time of experience, year of experience, gender, and an email address (optional), as well as report title, substance name(s), dose(s), and most importantly a description of the experience.

We encourage a narrative report style, written from the first-person viewpoint. The submission form

offers some suggestions, noting that a report is more likely to be published if it describes mindset and setting, dose and timing information, and a mention of any supplements, prescriptions, or over-the-counter medications the author has recently taken.

TRIAGING

Once a report is submitted, it enters a pool of reports to be preliminarily graded and commented on by two trained “triggers”—volunteers well read about a variety of psychoactives, their dosages, and their effects.

It’s the trigger’s job to sift through the mountains of submissions, bringing better, more useful, unique, and/or problematic reports to the attention of reviewers. They can highlight favorite parts or comment on any concerns they have about reports they read.

This process provides a well-defined way for volunteers to help with Erowid’s

Experience Vaults, and improves the overall quality of published reports by focusing the team’s attention on the most valuable submissions.

Rating

Each trigger assigns a grade from A+ (amazing) to F (unacceptable) based on factors like clarity of writing, interest, and data value. Rating is a subjective process, and it can be touchy to “grade” other people’s writing. We choose not to display report ratings publicly because of how seriously some people take this type of judgment. Triggers provide a rating without seeing the ratings that others have given a report.

Campaigns

To create order in the chaos, we run “campaigns” for triggers, which helps fast-track reports that match various criteria. Erowid staff might tailor a

Primary and Secondary Experience Report Categories		
<input checked="" type="radio"/> General	<input type="radio"/> Difficult Experiences	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Glowing Experiences
<input checked="" type="radio"/> First Times	<input type="radio"/> Bad Trips	<input type="radio"/> Mystical Experiences
<input type="radio"/> Combinations	<input type="radio"/> Health Problems	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Health Benefits
<input type="radio"/> Retrospective / Summary	<input type="radio"/> Train Wrecks & Trip Disasters	<input type="radio"/> Families
<input type="radio"/> Preparation / Recipes	<input type="radio"/> Addiction & Habituation	<input type="radio"/> Medical Use
		<input type="radio"/> What Was in That?
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Nature / Outdoors	<input type="radio"/> Overdose	<input type="radio"/> Multi-Day Experience
<input type="radio"/> Music Discussion	<input type="radio"/> Depression	<input type="radio"/> Second Hand Report
<input type="radio"/> Sex Discussion	<input type="radio"/> Hangover / Days After	<input type="radio"/> Cultivation / Synthesis
<input type="radio"/> Entities / Beings	<input type="radio"/> Post Trip Problems	<input type="radio"/> Pregnancy / Baby
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Guides / Sitters	<input type="radio"/> Loss of Magic	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Relationships
<input type="radio"/> Poetry	<input type="radio"/> HPPD / Lasting Visuals	<input type="radio"/> Personal Preparation
<input type="radio"/> Performance Enhancement		<input checked="" type="radio"/> Therapeutic Intent or Outcome

campaign to highlight a public health issue (keywords matching “overdose”), to coincide with a conference topic (“ketamine”), to fill in gaps in our published reports (“aspergers”, “1P-LSD”, or female authors), or just to entertain volunteers (“kittens”). We’ve found that manageable campaigns consist of 15–50 reports.

REVIEWING

Once a report has been triaged by two crew members, it’s ready for review. Reviewers are promoted from triagers who have shown dedication by triaging hundreds of reports, have demonstrated their understanding of the process through their comments and ratings, and have the time to commit to the more difficult reviewer role.

While volunteer reviewers are generally limited to publishing submissions that have been triaged by two people, senior reviewers and our editorial staff have the option to publish texts that haven’t undergone triaging.

Standardizing & Tagging

Reviewers standardize several types of information about each report. Titles and author names are edited where necessary; reports submitted with generic titles like “My Experience with LSD” will have a representative phrase from the report selected as their title. Full names in the Author Name field are changed to abbreviate the first or last name, and if the author gave a generic name like “LSD User”, it may be changed either to “Anonymous” or a unique pseudonym pulled from the text.

As reviewers read reports, they make note of the substance(s), form, dose, route of administration, and timing, which are displayed in a chart along with each report. They code reports for primary and contributing substances, the context of the experience (small group, festival, etc.), and an estimate of the intensity of the experience. They tag the report with primary and secondary

categories, and, taking into consideration the grades and comments of triagers, assign a final rating. This final rating is used to determine the default order in which reports appear in some lists and search results.

Editing

To preserve the original voice, writing skill, and style of the author, most reports are only lightly edited. We correct substance and chemical names where needed for clarity, fix some minor spelling and grammar errors, and remove promotional language about vendors and products. For privacy, we also usually remove full names and place names.

Erowid discourages the use of second-person framing in first-hand experiences. For this reason, wordings like “You will feel...” often get edited to “I felt...”. Further, we have an editorial policy of removing overly didactic or teaching commentary that isn’t directly related to the experience of the author.

Erowid Notes

Reviewers sometimes add a caution, warning, or “Erowid Note” to reports. There are dozens of standardized notes, including warnings about the dose being unusually or dangerously high, questionable substance identification, volatile solvent inhalation safety warnings, etc. The most common of these is a “Do Not Drive While Intoxicated” exhortation that we started adding to reports in the late 1990s. However, we’re well aware that too many cautionary notes can cause “warning blindness”, reducing their effectiveness.

The Cellar (F+)

If a report is considered unfit for display but contains a bit of relevant data that we don’t want to lose, it is given a rating of F+ and put into what we call the “Cellar”. By default, cellared reports don’t show up for visitors unless they specify that they want to see them. Examples include a report that mentions a hospitaliza-

tion but provides no verifiable details or contact information; an otherwise very poor quality report that describes a reaction or effect that isn’t widely documented; or a report of a rare combination of substances that we don’t find entirely credible.

Rejecting

Reviewers can reject reports that are hard to read due to bad grammar or spelling, that have no content related to topics we cover, that consist only of a litany of activities engaged in while high but don’t address the effects of any psychoactive drug, or that they think are falsified. These reports aren’t deleted but remain unedited and aren’t viewable by the public. About 56% of all reviewed reports are rejected.

Admin Attention

Some texts require special consideration before being published. These include the first few reports for a new substance, reports of deaths that don’t include verifying details or contact information, and reports suspected of being falsified.

TENDING

Once reports have been published, there’s additional curation that takes place over time. We crosscheck and standardize how substance names are displayed (species names sometimes change!), how categories are used, or what is considered a primary versus contributing substance. Tending involves tidying the data and verifying that reports have been coded and tagged appropriately.

The Erowid crew works hard to publish first-person experience reports in order to add to the global literature about psychoactive plants, chemicals, technologies, and practices. We’re proud of this corpus and will continue to develop it for use by researchers, health care professionals, and members of the public who want to learn about psychoactives or seek insight into people’s experiences with them. ●

Learning LIVING

by SellieG

VICARIOUSLY

The Joys and Challenges of Editing 3,200 Experience Reports

SellieG began volunteering in November 2011. He triaged 400 experience reports in his first twelve months and then trained for the much more time-consuming task of report reviewing. In his first three years as a reviewer, he published 100 reports. Since then, he's become one of the most engaged members of Erowid's Experience Vaults crew, having triaged 1,400 reports and reviewed over 3,200, more than all but four other reviewers, ever.

He has been key to the crew's decision to take on the challenge of publishing more experience reports in 2018 than any previous year—an ambitious goal that we're on target to meet.

Reviewing experience reports is a daily mental exercise. It involves careful reading, problem solving, research, and making judgment calls, all while expanding my personal knowledge in an entertaining way. Tasks can be as simple as verifying that a quotation is accurate, or more complex, like fact-checking drug formulations, neurochemistry, or extraction methods.

It's exciting to be one of the first people to ever read what someone else has written. The constant unknown of what I'll find in the next report never grows old and keeps me coming back for more. When I uncover a great report (entertaining, well written, descriptive of a unique situation or

combination of substances, etc.) there is genuine excitement and satisfaction in knowing I've found a needle in the haystack and will get to share it with the world.

One of my favorite moments is when an author achieves the nearly impossible and manages to capture the ineffable, describing something otherworldly, alien, or uniquely existential in a way that others can grasp.

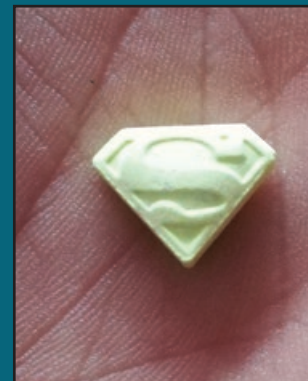
Readers get the incredible opportunity to live and learn vicariously through another person's experience, whether it's a positive

My time spent reading the experiences of others has reinforced my belief in the premise that no substance is inherently good or bad. People can have strong opinions about substances, believing some, as a rule, lead to misery or joy, or deeming plant-derived chemicals as superior to lab-derived ones. I like that Erowid takes no side in this debate and plays the role of neutral information source. Reviewing experiences, just like reading them, can challenge one's personal views and preferences, as well as test one's stereotypes about specific substances and the people who use them.

natural vs synthetic

At this point I had another realization: it was acceptable for me to use drugs that didn't grow from the ground. While I had no intention of abusing them, I became aware that these substances were just as significant to personal growth as some of the plants I had ingested. It was ridiculous for me to bar them from my body, let alone judge those who used them.

—naggyj (LSD & MDMA: Exp80128)



life-altering one or a disastrous train wreck. It's a phenomenon that has the power to move people. An author describing that they tripped way too hard because they didn't weigh their chemical with a scale could make a reader decide never to take an unmeasured dose of a potent chemical again.

Part of the reviewer role involves intentionally seeking out less common substances, unusual combinations, and a balance of positive and negative experiences. This has pushed me to read about many topics and substances at a depth or frequency I might normally not have. Through this, I often see a beautiful side to a

substance that many deem ugly and just as importantly, see something ugly when reading about a substance that is largely seen in a positive light.

In the psychedelic community, methamphetamine often carries a negative connotation but has certainly been used successfully in both therapeutic and recreational manners, via prescription or street sourcing. MDMA is commonly discussed in overly positive terms, but some reports document severely impaired judgement resulting in a myriad of problems, as well as the potential for compulsive use leading to addiction. I think it is important to bring to light as

more impactful than scientific papers. At their best, experience reports are compelling and easy to digest, as they describe effects and perspectives from a first-person point of view.

each publishable submission for relevant categories.

Reviewing appeals to my mathematical interests as well as my artistic interests. I get great pleasure from performing a behind-the-scenes role involving categorization, rating, curatorial, and librarian-type duties that increase the value of reports as a data set usable by researchers. Building this collection of texts offers an unprecedented opportunity to generate statistics with a level of legitimacy made possible by the sheer size of the reviewed data set.

On the flip side of the coin, I enjoy the creative ways authors describe their experiences. It's amazing to witness how parallel descriptions and insights show up across multiple reports but are uniquely expressed by each author. Set, setting, substance, and dosage could be the same within a hundred reports, but all one hundred authors will take a little something different away from the experience and share it with the reader in their own unique way. Extrapolated out to the ever-expanding list of chemicals that exist today, combined with a nearly infinite number of possible combinations of set and setting, the possibilities for how an author describes a mental or physical experience are essentially limitless.

I like knowing there will always be another inventive way of describing a sensation or experience in future reports, and eventually, we may gain greater perspective on human behavior and consciousness through our collective efforts. ●

When I uncover a great report, there is genuine excitement and satisfaction in knowing I've found a needle in the haystack and will get to share it with the world.

The most accurate book in the world could lay out the pros and cons of using a particular substance, but if the book sucks to read, no one will read it, and no one gains anything. Well-written experience reports don't

tackling the ineffable

I begin to imagine every fleeting moment, how exact and precise every occurrence in the world was. Normally, while tripping, I would appreciate the beauty of this, like thinking about a certain thing in a certain situation, how that would happen just once, and never again. How every specific instance swirled forth from the chaos. But instead of appreciating each moment, I cried

at the tragedy of their fleetingness and their death, and mourned for the astronomical number of moments that would never ever happen, for the ones that never did happen, for the ones that weren't happening, for the ones that happened and will never happen again.

—nervewing (LSD & Psilocybin Mushrooms: Exp110278)



many sides of each plant or chemical as possible. Having access to a wide variety of information allows readers to shape their own opinions on complicated topics.

In some ways, these tales from a stranger's life can be equally if not

suck to read. Erowid volunteers put in the elbow grease of sifting through submissions and getting the most articulate and useful content to the top of the ever-expanding list of published reports and make this list sortable and searchable by coding

9

Things You May Not Know About Experience Reports

1

737

substances have at least one published experience report in the Erowid database. 355 substances have at least ten.

2

55%

of all reports that have been read and fully reviewed by the Erowid crew have been rejected.

3

112,185

reports have been submitted to Erowid (including both published and unpublished reports).

4

Psychedelics

reports are the longest, followed by phenethylamine, yoga, fasting, and ritual reports.

5

Mushrooms

have the most published reports out of all substances (2,380).

6

1804 & 1848

are the years of the oldest experiences in the collection, one for opium, the other for hashish.

7

31,857

reports have been published by Erowid over 23 years.

8

6.0%

of all published reports, and ~4.7% of unreviewed reports, include LSD as one of the primary substances.

9

17.8

is the average age at time of use for volatile inhalant reports (glue, paint, gasoline, etc.), the youngest of any substance.

WHY SUBMIT A REPORT TO EROWID?

Taking contemporaneous notes during an experience may be personally helpful, and sharing them can definitely assist others. How common or unusual was your reaction? Your dose response? Did you enjoy it? Did you feel improved by the experience? Do you wish you'd never tried it?

We're past the days when it was hard to publish one's thoughts to a global audience. But Erowid's Experience Vaults aren't a blog where the goal is to share individual stories. We're building a resource from which both basic information (dose, timing, types of effects) and more complex data (drug interactions, positive and negative life effects, nuanced impact of set and setting) can be gathered.

Longer-Term Perspectives

As the internet matures, so do the demands put on the data streams. Perhaps our current biggest unmet need is for retrospective reports, where people look back at their unique lifetime of use and reflect on what they think about it now.

Filling in Knowledge Gaps

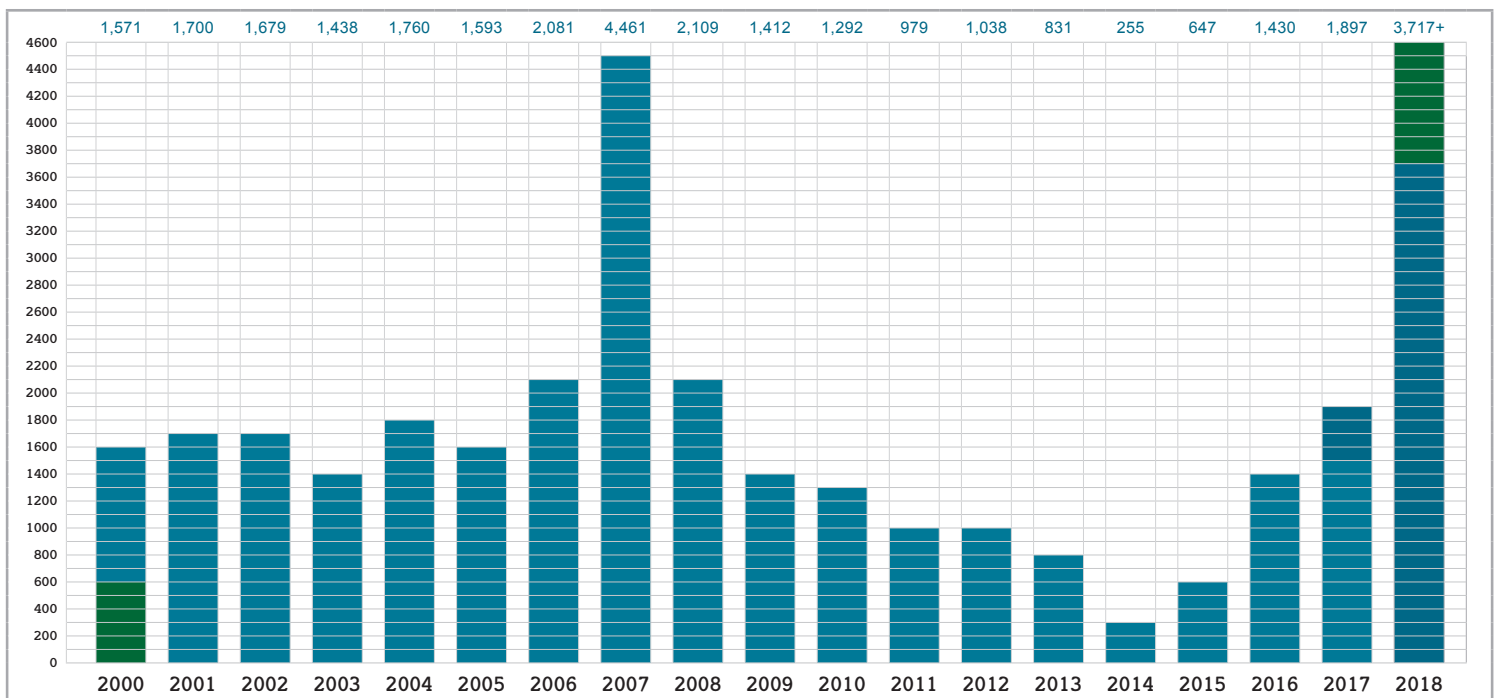
Even with 112,000 experience reports, there are critical holes in the global, available knowledge about most substances. For example, as we begin to fill in what "normal" reactions are to psilocybin mushrooms, we still have very little data about drug-drug interactions or unusual physiological responses. We also want reports from a full range of ages, genders, and levels of experience.

The Future Needs You!

It's difficult to know exactly how the global undertaking of sharing experiences about psychoactive plants, chemicals, technologies, and practices will impact the future. These topics were prohibited terrain not long ago, and the dominant voices came from bureaucracies that had essentially one message: don't, and if you do, it's wrong and bad for you. You can help by adding your story to the pool to make sure the future includes a better representation of the pros and cons, benefits and harms, dos and don'ts of these intriguing components of human experience. ●

[Erowid.org/exp/submit](https://erowid.org/exp/submit)

NUMBER OF REPORTS PUBLISHED EACH YEAR



The spike in reports published in 2006–2008 was due in large part to a single volunteer named Antheia who triaged and/or reviewed more than 30,000 reports over the course of a few years. The dip in published reports in 2013–2015 was the result of a three-year leave of absence taken by Sylvia Thyssen, our Volunteer Manager, who spent time pursuing other ventures. We're now on track to publish more than 4,500 reports in 2018!

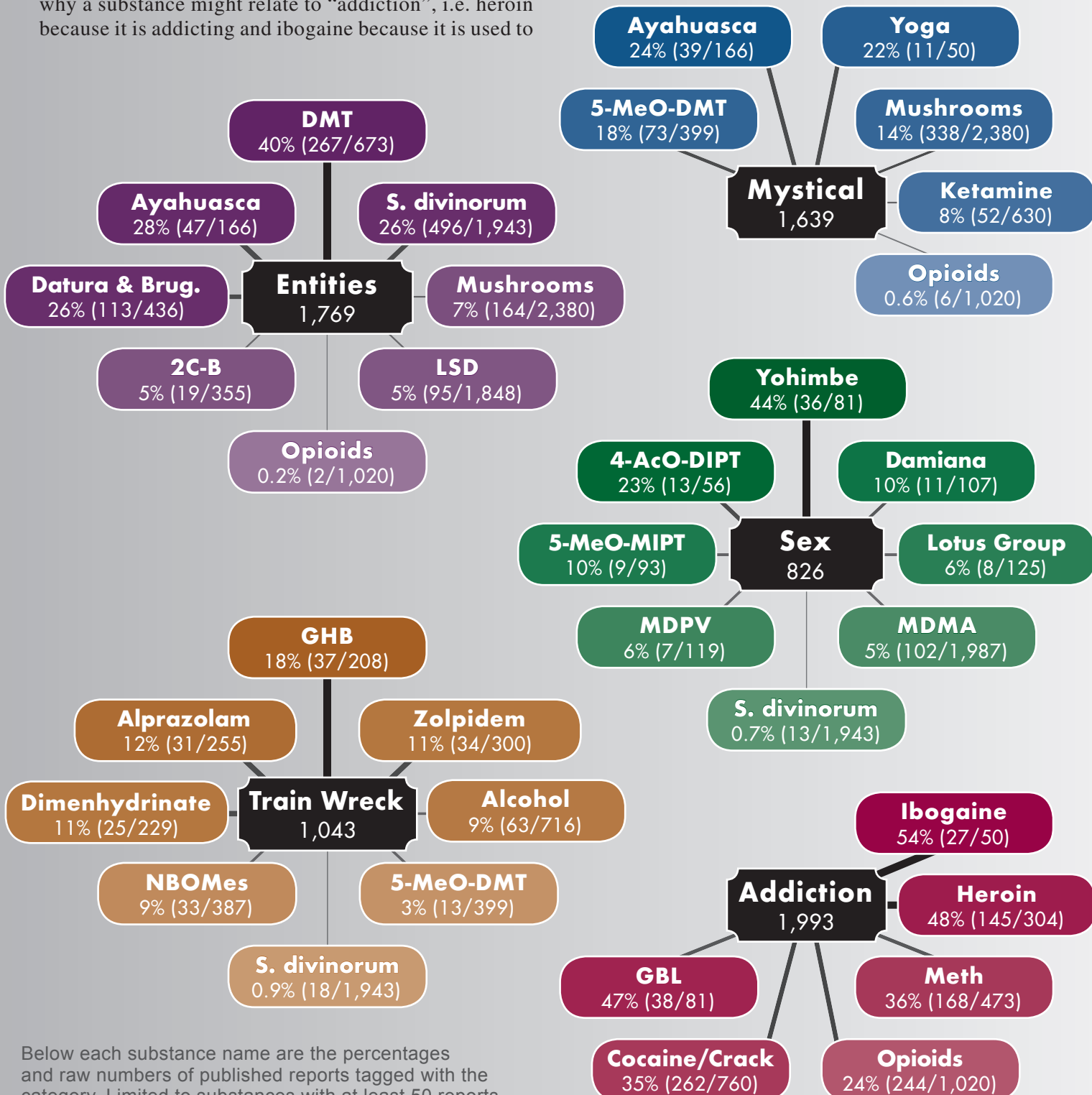
CATEGORIZING EXPERIENCES

How are different substances represented within topics?

Below are examples showing which substances have some of the highest and lowest percentage representation in several categories. Reviewers select appropriate categories (topics) for each report. Some associations are simple, but there are also correlative cases where categories can have multiple, or even opposite, meanings.

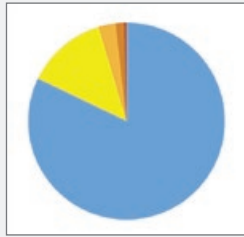
Consider "Addiction". There are different reasons why a substance might relate to "addiction", i.e. heroin because it is addicting and ibogaine because it is used to

treat addiction. Or perhaps an author realizes something about their addiction to tobacco while on psilocybin mushrooms. In another example, benzodiazepines are often used in emergency departments to treat people during "Train Wrecks". Category statistics can provide interesting insights! ●

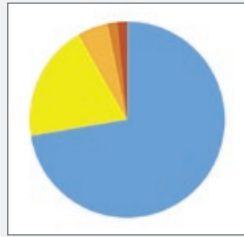


Below each substance name are the percentages and raw numbers of published reports tagged with the category. Limited to substances with at least 50 reports.

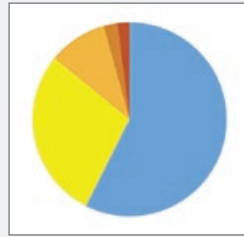
FREQUENCY OF USE IN COMBINATION WITH ANOTHER SUBSTANCE



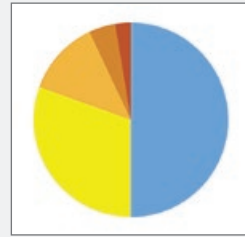
Salvia divinorum



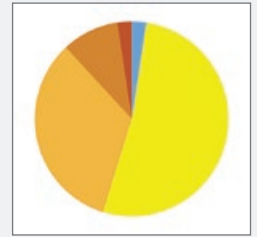
Mushrooms



MDMA



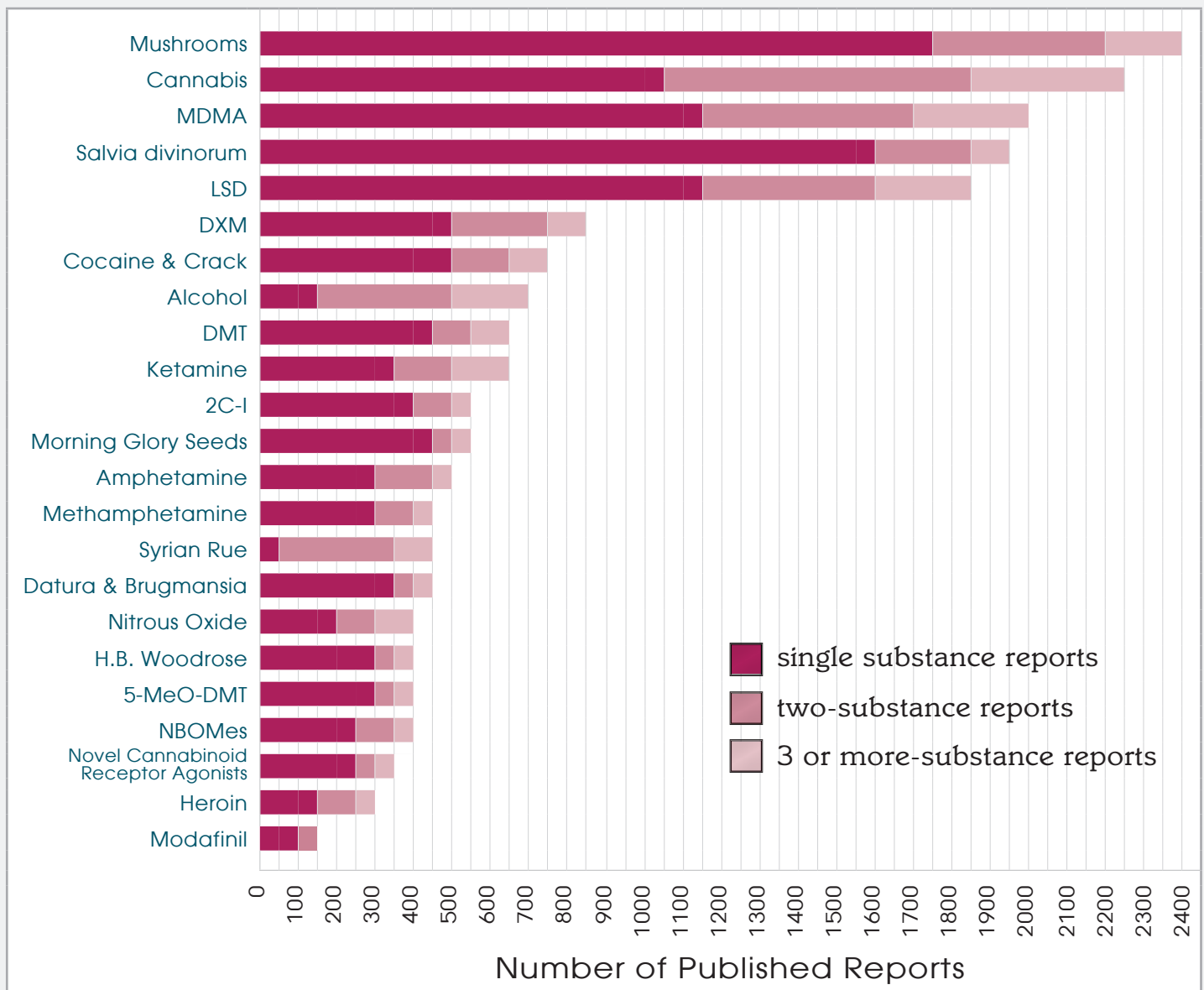
Nitrous Oxide



Banisteriopsis caapi

Some substances are far more likely than others to be used in combination with another drug. For example, MAOIs like *Banisteriopsis caapi* or Syrian Rue are often combined with DMT-containing plants like *Psychotria viridis* (or DMT) to make orally active ayahuasca or huasca-like mixtures. Alternately, drugs like MDMA or LSD are sometimes considered basics or the foundation upon which other substances are added to enhance, increase, decrease, or shift effects.

PROPORTION OF SINGLE vs MULTI-SUBSTANCE EXPERIENCES



AYAHUASCA & HUASCA-LIKES AN EYE ON



Notably Positive

17%
GLOWING

Ayahuasca and other huasca-type combinations have a surprisingly high percentage of “Glowing” and/or “Mystical” experience reports.

17%
MYSTICAL

The rate of “Train Wrecks & Trip Disasters” is quite low compared to datura and brugmansia. In addition to the difference in effects, this is likely also related to age of users and the larger portion of huasca-type experiences that include a guide.

1.2%
TRAIN
WRECKS

Ayahuasca is a psychedelic South American brew traditionally made from the *Banisteriopsis caapi* vine (an MAOI) and *Psychotria viridis* (containing DMT). But other combinations of MAOIs and DMT (or 5-MeO-DMT) are also referred to with “huasca” nomenclature and the experiences share similarities.



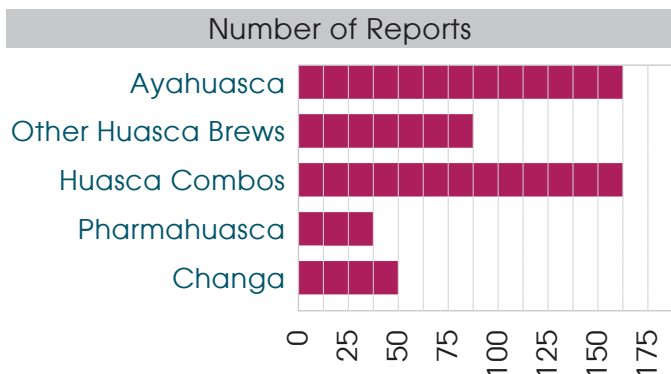
It Takes Two or More

Ayahuasca presents unique challenges for categorization because it is usually a combination of multiple substances. Tracking what ingredients are taken together in a brew can be difficult, though obviously meaningful. Some combinations are traditional, others modern approximations. In many cases, the combination of DMT and an MAOI isn't in the form of a tea or brew at all.

We work to categorize and label reports so that these differences can be identified. In fact, we recently did a

full audit of all the huasca-related reports and split them into the following groupings:

- Ayahuasca** — traditional brews containing *B. caapi*, usually with *P. viridis*, in tea form.
- Huasca Brews** — non-traditional teas containing a plant-based MAOI and plant-based DMT (and/or 5-MeO-DMT); example: Syrian Rue and *Mimosa tenuiflora*.
- Huasca Combos** — an MAOI-containing plant used in conjunction with a DMT-containing plant, but not taken together in one tea.
- Pharmahuasca** — an MAOI and DMT (and/or 5-MeO-DMT) combination, with at least one being pharmaceutical or a purified chemical. Forms include liquids, capsules, tablets, or powders.
- Changa** — a smoked combination of DMT (and/or 5-MeO-DMT) and an MAOI, often using *B. caapi*.
- Huasca Group** — a container group that includes all reports in any of the above. ●



Triaging as Training

The California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS) in San Francisco offers a certificate course in Psychedelic-Assisted Therapies and Research (CPTR). Since 2017, Erowid has partnered with CIIS CPTR to offer students the opportunity to fulfill the program's required volunteer hours by volunteering for Erowid Center.

CIIS CPTR students join our experience report crew, undergo triager training tailored to their program, and then read and rate submitted reports. Some of these students have little personal experience with psychedelics, so triaging is intended to help them learn about the physical and psychological effects of psychedelic and empathogenic substances that they might work with professionally. Erowid editors create customized campaigns so that CIIS students read and triage reports about substances of therapeutic interest, such as LSD, MDMA, psilocybin, ayahuasca, and ketamine.

This project is a win-win-win situation, helping Erowid process report submissions, helping CIIS provide appropriate volunteer learning opportunities for its students, and helping students develop a broader sense of the experiences that their future clients might encounter. ●

Visualizations

Erowid's experience report dataset draws many people to try their hand at visualizations. Word clouds are often created to communicate differences between one psychoactive substance and another. Researchers



Scientific American



Business Insider



MantasCode.com

Excerpt from Darwin's Pharmacy, by R. Doyle

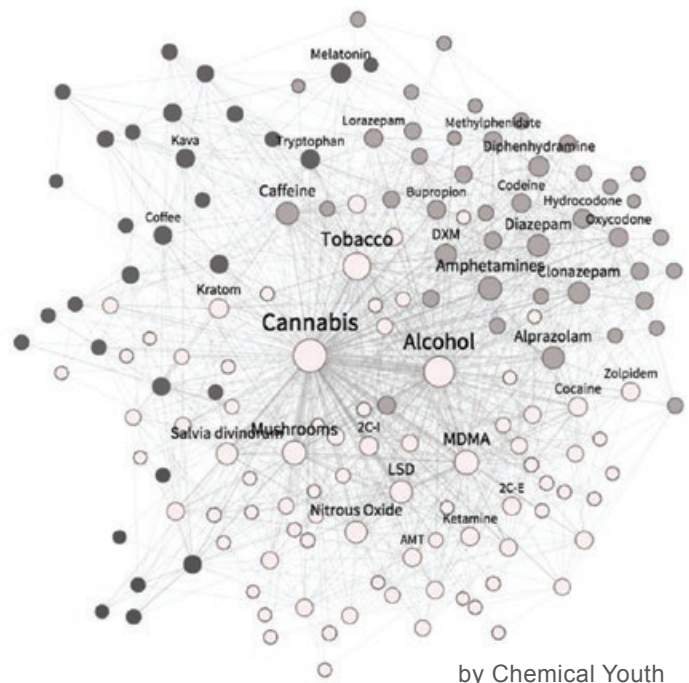
"[...] 2C-I has yielded, among other things, four hundred and thirteen experience reports posted on Erowid as of June 2010. Clicking from one report to another, I immediately come across a trope recognizable from other psychonauts: the mistake. The hilariously handled Nanobrain writes of an ill-disciplined tongue indeed:

T 0:00 The crystalline powder was diluted to a 1 mg/g concentration in an aqueous vodka solution, which required vigorous shaking to dissolve completely. I drink 12 g of this solution, containing 12 mg active. Then, I make the mistake. I lick the inside of the paper envelope formerly containing the 2C-I, as well as swallowing a couple very small flecks that were noted near the scale.

The mistake is legion in trip reports—hence Nanobrain's metadiscourse on the mistake—"Then, I made *the* mistake," rather than "a mistake" reads like a refrain because it is one. [...]

As such, trip reports such as those posted on The Vaults of Erowid compose a remarkable database for the programming of psychedelic research." ●

from Chemical Youth at the University of Amsterdam analyzed Erowid experience reports and published two articles with visualizations, one online and one in *Medicine Anthropology Theory*. The chart below is a visualization of which substances are most often combined. ●



by Chemical Youth

A Sampling of Additional Data



All	31,857	40,651	25.5	6.4	5,055	14.0	6.3	5.6	12.9	5.2	6.3	3.3	1804
Mushrooms	2,380	2,848	25.8	8.6	7,006	13.0	5.8	6.9	19.7	14.2	0.3	2.9	1914
Cannabis/Hash	2,267	9,358	26.8	2.9	5,144	14.6	8.7	3.2	12.8	6.2	3.8	2.0	1848
MDMA	1,987	2,767	23.6	4.4	5,280	26.4	4.0	2.4	24.6	5.1	4.4	2.6	1978
Salvia divinorum	1,943	3,399	28.4	9.8	5,467	6.5	9.7	25.7	8.7	14.0	0.1	0.9	1972
LSD	1,848	3,123	22.0	9.0	7,621	15.6	8.3	5.2	17.4	9.7	0.9	5.4	1953
DXM	848	3,828	22.9	1.3	4,368	13.5	10.4	1.5	6.7	4.4	7.3	4.4	1989
Cocaine	760	1,229	25.4	1.9	3,723	27.9	3.2	0.1	7.6	0.3	34.8	2.9	1986
Alcohol	716	2,914	24.4	1.7	4,041	13.4	13.0	0.7	9.6	1.4	7.1	8.8	1977
DMT	673	620	24.4	18.2	6,486	12.7	10.0	39.7	22.3	19.5	0.3	1.6	1961
Ketamine	630	217	23.8	10.0	5,506	16.4	7.9	7.9	13.5	8.4	5.1	2.7	1986
2C-I	549	129	21.7	11.6	6,124	9.3	2.2	2.6	27.1	4.2	0.0	2.9	2000
Morning Glory Seeds	543	641	23.8	5.4	5,837	8.3	2.2	4.1	17.9	10.7	0.0	1.3	1966
Amphetamine	523	1,170	22.7	4.2	4,768	19.9	4.2	1.3	10.9	1.0	21.7	1.7	1970
Huasca Group	494	58	30.5	28.6	8,048	12.0	8.9	27.2	17.4	17.0	0.0	1.2	1974
Kratom	483	350	27.6	9.0	3,575	14.8	1.2	0.6	14.6	1.2	13.0	0.6	2000
Methamphetamine	473	471	24.0	3.8	5,169	35.1	7.4	2.5	8.3	0.9	35.5	4.2	1968
Mescaline Cacti	438	150	27.2	20.6	7,590	5.7	0.9	7.6	23.6	10.3	0.0	0.0	1886
Datura & Brugmansia	436	333	23.6	6.8	5,136	9.4	21.3	26.1	2.3	2.8	0.9	17.3	1974
Nitrous Oxide	408	340	24.3	8.8	4,990	14.7	3.7	7.1	17.4	10.5	7.6	2.0	1874
H.B. Woodrose Seeds	403	421	23.3	8.9	5,340	9.9	4.2	1.5	20.4	9.4	0.0	0.7	1975
5-MeO-DMT	399	17	29.0	19.5	5,117	8.5	13.8	7.0	14.0	18.3	1.3	3.3	1986
NBOMes	387	183	21.9	14.6	6,651	10.3	9.3	3.6	16.3	2.1	0.3	8.5	2010
2C-B	355	149	23.1	19.1	5,945	12.4	6.2	5.4	21.1	3.7	0.3	3.4	1979
Nutmeg	355	502	26.8	3.1	3,880	11.9	1.1	0.3	7.3	2.0	0.0	0.6	1959
Novel Cannabinoid Receptor Agonists	345	482	25.5	11.3	4,893	12.2	16.5	1.2	7.5	0.9	5.8	4.1	2006
Diphenhydramine	319	1,735	19.9	3.0	4,375	18.6	10.4	7.6	2.2	0.3	5.4	8.2	1996
Heroin	304	457	21.8	4.7	4,730	20.5	6.9	0.7	8.3	0.3	47.9	7.3	1967
Dreaming	293	13	28.7	8.8	3,947	12.0	1.0	8.2	10.6	2.7	1.4	0.3	1993
Amanitas	259	248	34.0	8.6	4,532	5.0	5.8	5.0	7.3	8.1	0.0	3.1	1975
Methoxetamine	216	41	24.8	12.9	6,361	13.4	9.3	7.4	13.9	5.1	4.6	3.7	2010
Volatile Inhalants	209	346	17.8	2.7	3,752	11.5	9.6	9.1	1.9	3.4	13.4	7.7	1973
GHB	208	40	27.2	5.8	3,668	21.2	16.4	2.4	6.7	0.5	14.9	17.8	1996
Methylone	176	56	27.1	17.8	5,750	10.2	3.4	0.6	22.7	0.6	4.0	0.6	2001
Modafinil	153	125	31.4	15.2	3,429	20.3	0.7	0.0	5.9	0.7	7.2	2.0	2001
Absinthe	134	61	22.9	5.5	3,221	13.4	2.2	0.8	9.7	1.5	2.2	0.8	1993
Meditation	130	39	29.7	26.1	7,350	9.2	2.3	14.7	27.9	20.9	1.6	2.3	1982
PCP	124	114	19.8	1.9	3,880	19.4	8.1	2.4	7.3	2.4	1.6	3.2	1970
MDPV	119	31	26.7	7.5	4,047	5.0	10.1	0.8	5.9	0.0	17.7	2.5	2005
Iboga Alkaloid Group	102	2	31.8	34.9	13,112	8.8	3.9	24.5	21.6	2.9	26.5	0.0	1997
1P-LSD	83	0	24.6	18.0	7,022	3.7	1.2	2.4	17.1	3.7	0.0	1.2	2013

Published	Unpublished (approx)	Average Author Age	% Rated B or Higher	Avg Length (chars)	% Female Authors	% Extreme Intensity	% Entities	% Glowing	% Mystical	% Addiction	% Train Wreck	Earliest Experience
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NOVEL DRUG BRIEFS 3

ETH-LAD • MDMA-CHMICA • U-47,700 • α -PVP

by The Erowid Crew

Erowid monitors and tracks novel psychoactive substances (NPS) and pharmaceuticals. NPSs often reach the public long before robust information is available about them. Following are short descriptions of several NPSs.

ETH-LAD

6-ethyl-6-*nor*-lysergic acid diethylamide

ETH-LAD is a psychedelic in the lysergamide class. Originally described by Dr. Alexander Shulgin in his 1997 book *TiHKAL*, it became available online in mid-2015. At first sold with 150 μ g per blotter hit, by the end of 2015 vendors had lowered the dosage to 100 μ g, which remains the standard in 2018.

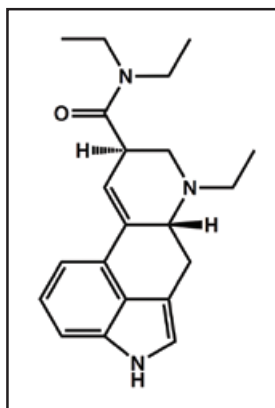
With effects similar though not identical to LSD, ETH-LAD is generally well liked. Some report mildly empathogenic effects and describe it as slightly gentler than LSD. It produces strong open- and closed-eye visuals at moderate or high doses. A few people experience nausea as the effects begin.

Users report that 20 μ g has noticeable effects and that it may be slightly more potent than LSD. Effects last 7–12 hours (longer with higher doses), a little shorter in duration than LSD.

Cheshire Rat describes her experience with 150 μ g ETH-LAD (Exp107190):

I lay back on my bed to listen. [...] I am melting into the bed and the visuals have totally eclipsed my sight. Eyes open, eyes closed, it almost doesn't matter, but when I do close my eyes and let go I become immersed in bright blue, 3D space full of construction paper geometry. [...] I'm staring wide-eyed at the ceiling, feeling awestruck and utterly floored. Every second is an eternity, and it just keeps going.

[...] I get up to get water, and the glass is full of neon pastel spirograph lines. [...] The peak of each song is orgasmic. Sex could have been amazing, but the logistics seem too complicated. The album lasts lifetimes, and then it's over.



MDMB-CHMICA

methyl-(S)-2-(1-(cyclohexylmethyl)-1H-indole-3-carboxamido)-3,3-dimethylbutanoate

MDMB-CHMICA is a novel synthetic cannabinoid receptor agonist first seen in online marketplaces in late 2014. It has been sold in a variety of infused herbal smoking products, including “Black Mamba”, “Mojo”, “Sky High”, and “Black Diamond” (remember that, due to lack of regulation, the contents of such products can change over time). It is a full agonist of the CB1 receptor.

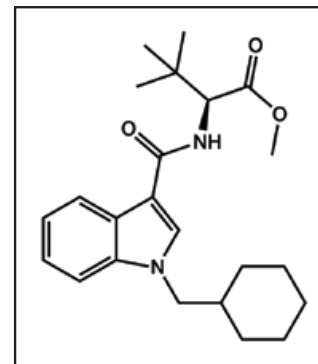
Typical doses of MDMB-CHMICA are reportedly 0.1–0.3 mg. Its effects when smoked are not well understood, but appear to be similar, though stronger, than those of other synthetic cannabinoids. These effects include euphoria, stimulation, apathy, visual and auditory hallucinations, paranoia, and anxiety. Onset of effects may sometimes be delayed. Primary effects last 2–4 hours.

In mid-2016, it was estimated to be the most prevalent synthetic cannabinoid in Germany. MDMB-CHMICA is controlled in some countries and legal in others. It was emergency scheduled in the US in December 2016, and banned across the EU on February 28, 2017. Since then, it has become substantially less available. Prior to being banned, it cost an average of about \$13 per gram.

MDMB-CHMICA has been linked to more than 28 deaths in the EU and elsewhere. One experimenter named Call Me Kiwi describes his experience after smoking MDMB-CHMICA (Exp105904):

I had a little more euphoria but so far so good. Three minutes go by and I notice it's getting stronger, not as bad as other synthetics but felt a little uncomfortable. So when it hit five minutes I felt it continue to build but no warning signs. All of a sudden bam sucker punch to the face I'm delirious.

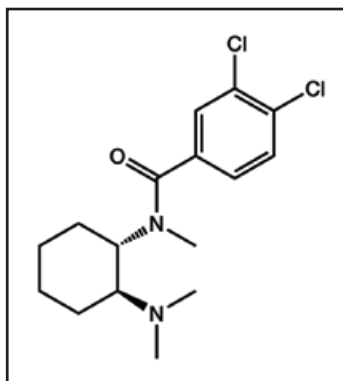
It felt like I was lost not like with a hallucinogen where you're still there in your head, but a whole new level of trip I never experienced. Then I got extremely sick trying to vomit...



U-47700

trans-3,4-dichloro-N-(2-(dimethylamino)cyclohexyl)-N-methylbenzamide

The opioid U-47700 (an analog of AH-7921, another opioid you've never heard of) was first synthesized and researched in the 1970s by the Upjohn pharmaceutical company. Like its parent compound, it has never been approved or used as a pharmaceutical medicine in any country.



U-47700 became available through online grey markets in late 2014 (from Asian and Eastern European suppliers) and over the next few months quickly became the most popular novel opioid. Its potency is estimated to be about 7.5 times that of morphine, differentiating it from several far more potent fentanyl analogues and possibly making it more desirable to broader audiences, including occasional users.

Initial descriptions of its effects were very positive, with reports pointing to euphoria and “nodding” at oral doses from 10 to 25 mg and effects lasting a relatively short 1–3 hours. In April 2016, musician Prince died of what was determined to be a fentanyl overdose, but U-47700 was reportedly also found in his system. It is unclear whether Prince took it intentionally or whether he took a counterfeit opioid tablet that contained it. It was placed in Schedule I in the United States in April 2018.

TrippyAstronomer describes an experience with 20 mg (Exp106314):

My very first experience, I took 20 mg which is a somewhat conservative dose. [...] Since it was my first time, and there wasn't very much information on the substance, I figured 20 mg would be a good place to start. I have no opioid tolerance whatsoever...

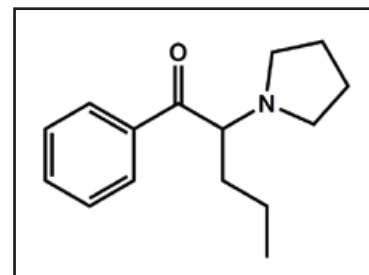
[T]he effects were in fact very similar to tramadol. I felt completely content with everything—a feeling I usually get when on opioids. [I] feel very relaxed and tired, and my breathing slows down and breaths are deeper. I could easily nod off if I took a higher dose, say 40-50 mg. [A] dose that high may produce slight nausea, but nothing overwhelming.

The effects lasted for two or three hours before tapering off, and probably an additional hour or two before baselining completely. [...] I enjoy it as more of an end-of-the-day relaxer, but opioids by nature have an addictive property to them, so be mindful of your habits!

α-PVP

alpha-pyrrolidinovalerophenone

The synthetic cathinone-pyrrolidine α-PVP, also known as “flakka”, or “gravel” was first developed by a German pharmaceutical company in the 1960s. Cathinones are chemicals similar in structure and effects to the stimulant found in the *Catha edulis* shrub (khat).



Alpha-PVP first became popular in the US in 2013. It has been misrepresented as other euphoric stimulants including 2-fluoroamphetamine, 4-fluoroamphetamine, 5-methyl-MDA, MDMA, and 5-MAPB, as seen in EcstasyData results. It was placed into Schedule I in the US via emergency scheduling in 2014 and permanently on March 1, 2017. It is also illegal in Brazil, China, the UK, and many EU countries.

Its dose, effects, and duration are similar to those of MDPV, the original “bath salts”. Effects include alertness, euphoria, and talkativeness, but repeated or high doses can trigger paranoia and hallucinations. The two primary types of use are performance enhancement (“functional stimulation”) and euphoric stimulation; opinions on its usefulness for either have been mixed. There is a large demand for euphoric stimulants in the NPS market.

Though not new among NPS stimulants, α-PVP has received a lot of attention from media outlets under headlines like “Zombie drug can cause ‘superhuman rage’, cannibalism”. That particular headline occurred after 16 people were hospitalized in Australia in October 2016. Two days later, it was revealed that the hospitalizations were, in fact, the result of an unrelated NBOMe. But low-data journalists love having a “zombie drug” to blame.

Its effects are described by author ToastedJelly (Exp103367):

It had me off my ass and cleaning, organizing and working like crazy. I made it through almost a full day of work in a 3-hour period. I felt happy, talkative, smart and productive. Main high lasted about 3 hours until it started to slowly wear off. Elevated heart rate and restlessness began to kick in and stuck around for hours afterwards.

Side effects which are not so desirable seemed to stick around much longer after the high went away. The comedown isn't terrible in terms of a headache or anything, but damn it my heart needs to seriously calm the shit down. I would recommend sleeping pills or similar as almost a must to have for the come down. ●

QA

The Experience Crew Weighs In

Q What motivates you to volunteer to help with experience reports?

I became a triager because I was already reading tons of reports and figured I would use the time more constructively and give back by volunteering. I enjoy the vicarious experience offered through reading and am glad that I can gauge what a substance or combination has to offer without trying it myself.

— Lotn

triaging reports with negative outcomes (looking at you, opioids and stimulants). Though anecdotal, these hold a lot of important information that could someday save a life.

— ThatFeel

Reports that include specific details of substance, dosage, context, and effects levels. It's a bonus when there's personality, with unique flourishes of stream-of-consciousness words that give a flavor of the experience.

— Earth

Publishing reports that provide an easy and pleasant-to-read fundamental sense of the effects of a drug, and picturing how that could help someone who is considering trying that substance have a good experience.

— Fire

Encountering substances that I know nothing about.

— Spent

It surprised me to find triaging to be a nice filler activity. It's not necessarily something I have to sit down and commit multiple hours at a time to doing. And with a phone in my pocket I can triage anywhere, on the beach, on the train, at the gym, etc.

— ErichZann

More than 250 Erowid volunteers have participated in triaging and reviewing experience reports since mid-2000.

I like reports that remind me of meaningful experiences I've had. And I enjoy reports where the author prepares well, makes good choices, and then

Psychedelics have shaped most of the major decisions in my life and, as far as I'm concerned, for the better. I couldn't have used them safely without the information gathered from experience reports, either here or in the Shulgins' *PiHKAL* and *TiHKAL*. I want to be sure that others have access to good information as well.

— Anonymous

not only has a good time, but also learns something.

— Fire

Q What else do you like about working with experience reports?

I like learning about what drugs are out there. Also, reports that make me laugh.

— Uil

Q What kinds of reports do you like reading?

Any report that describes a subtle or unique observation, especially ones that mention preparation, intention, self-reflection, or consciousness.

— Spoon

It's always nice to see a new submission from an author who we've published before, or from an atypical author, like someone in their 40s or older. Also, I appreciate that I can still be surprised by what I read, even after reviewing more than 13,000 reports.

— Spoon

Q What is hardest about triaging and reviewing?

It can be complicated to review reports that involve more than three substances or more than five or six separate dosing instances.

— Spoon

The first report I triaged was almost 12 years ago! Sometimes I only triage/review a few reports per year. Then, when I do find time, I feel rusty. So I start by doing some triaging and check whether I'm scoring them about the same as other triagers before I trust myself to do reviews. I also find that I don't feel qualified to rate reports about really new drugs until I've had time to learn about them.

— Uil

Despite the gloomy tone of many of them, I find my passion is in

Rating reports can be hard. Has the author stated dosage? A timeline? Their set and settings? These slight

details, when considered together, determine whether the reader's attention will be held long enough for them to glean some knowledge.

— ThatFeel

Long reports are harder to get myself to read. Unless the quality is very high, many long reports include a lot of extraneous text that doesn't provide much value.

— Fire

Q What do you like least about triaging and reviewing?

When I first started, I didn't realize how bad many of the reports would be. Lots of submitted reports aren't worth publishing. They have too little useful information for others. I wish there was some way to train authors how to write better reports, but that's not an easy thing to do.

— Uil

The worst part is not being able to ask the author questions, sometimes for clarity and other times for more information about a fascinating experience. It can also be disheartening to read about people needlessly suffering the effects of prohibition.

— Pskoactv

I'm kind of amazed how stupid some people's actions are, and I've found my enthusiasm for full-blown drug legalization waning. This is not to say that I support the war on drugs in any way, shape, or form, but I've come to better understand why anxious authority figures might take some of the steps they do.

—Mujolila

Reports where "fucked up" or "tripping ballz" are the main description of effects aren't that fun to read.

— Spoon

I dislike when people refer to themselves or a friend by an initial. Just give fake names, they're much easier to read!

— Lotn

Q How have your views about the Experience Vaults changed over time?

Dramatically! I now realize just how large an endeavor the Experience Vaults are. It gives me a greater perspective on the range of experiences people can have from the same substances.

— Pskoactv

When we first developed the experience report system and reviewing process in 2000, we prepared for a future where we would have 100,000 reports. But I never quite pictured what that would be like. My sense of the usefulness of a large number of experience reports has grown over the last 18 years. The research value of the collection is immense, including gems, poorly written reports, and everything in between. We get requests from

It's good practice to keep notes about the plants and drugs one ingests. Do it for yourself, whether or not you intent to publish them.

—Earth

researchers to use the experiences dataset on a weekly basis.

— Fire

At first, I wanted to see all reports handled quickly, and I was a little discouraged by the backlog. Over time, I've realized that isn't the most important thing. More important to me is publishing reports of new substances since there is so little info on them.

— Uil

Q What would you tell someone who's considering volunteering?

Do it! There's no pressure and every little bit helps. If you are interested in studying any aspect of drug use, Erowid presents an invaluable asset. Contributing time gives a volunteer valuable experience that helps the world to better understand psychoactives.

— Pskoactv

It's wonderful to be a part of the eclectic and ever-evolving group of Erowid volunteers. Members of the crew have vastly different interests, skills, and lifestyles. I would say we share common goals of harm reduction and education related to substance use.

— SellieG

Q What would you tell someone who's thinking of submitting a report?

It's good practice to keep notes about the plants and drugs one ingests. Do it for yourself, whether or not you intend to publish them. Human memory is fallible and it's hard to remember specifics months or years later. By keeping a record, it's easier to improve future experiences and avoid errors. By submitting a report to Erowid, you can help others do the same.

— Earth

I've been surprised that it's not the best-written reports that seem the most valuable. Instead, it's those that contain the most useful information. You don't have to be a great writer to produce a worthy report, just have a sense of what you want the reader to know and what you've wanted to know when reading other people's reports.

— Lotn ○

What's Like What?

Visualizing Complex Data—Simple is Often Wrong

by Earth Erowid

Psychoactive plants, chemicals, technologies, and practices form a complicated and diverse constellation with which humans constantly interact. Over the years, Erowid has built a data ontology (categories and relationships) using taxonomic schemes created by others, and designing our own systems and databases, to show the similarities and distinctions between different psychoactives.

There are many ways to measure, group, or differentiate mind-altering drugs: experiential effects, molecular structure, *in vitro* or *in vivo* receptor binding, receptor activation, agonism vs. antagonism, neurotransmitter transporter effects, metabolic pathways, brain scans outputs, body-area distribution, potency, common routes of administration, active metabolites, type of user, cultural associations, or average cost, among many others. Many of these factors can't be usefully distilled down to a simple numeric scale, let alone used to address combinations of drugs where the combination itself might be considered one "substance", such as ayahuasca.

To try to describe and capture similarities and differences, we create lists and tables filled with substance names and related data. Substances that have commonalities are connected with links. We make word clouds to help define characteristics. We use groupings based on molecule structures, like "phenethylamines" or "tryptamines". We compare lists of effects. We base some groupings on whether a psychoactive is from a natural source, a chemistry lab, or the pharmaceutical industry.

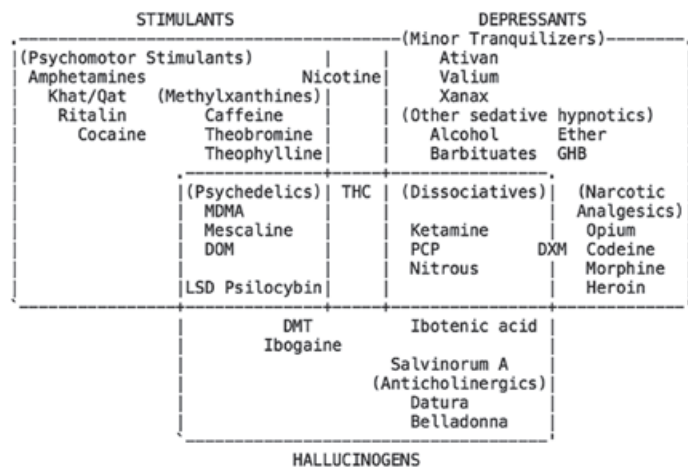
One potential visualization would be an impossibly convoluted many-dimensional map, where each axis represents a different measurement or characteristic of a substance. Even if it were feasible to offer such a visual display, it would still be insufficient to represent the complexity of the reality: individual neurons are unique microscopic solar systems. Each neuron lives inside overlapping interrelated communicating webs, inside larger and wider organizational structures. Sub-atomic interactions influence molecular responses, which shift protein behaviors, which alter cellular activity.

Up and up, higher and higher, levels of organization build on each other as they get more complex. And meaningful drug effects extend beyond a single human being; even cultural context and language, which are external to an individual, alter consciousness and drive some of the effects of psychoactive drugs down at the level of neural activity. Somewhere in the operations and interactions of those systems and among the emergent psychoactive characteristics, arises phenomenal experiential consciousness.

Ultimately, the most important factors for Erowid's purposes are the reported effects. While we love geeky details, we believe that experience data

most accurately records similarities and differences between substances in a way that people are interested in. Further, every individual may have a unique response to sets of stimuli at any given moment.

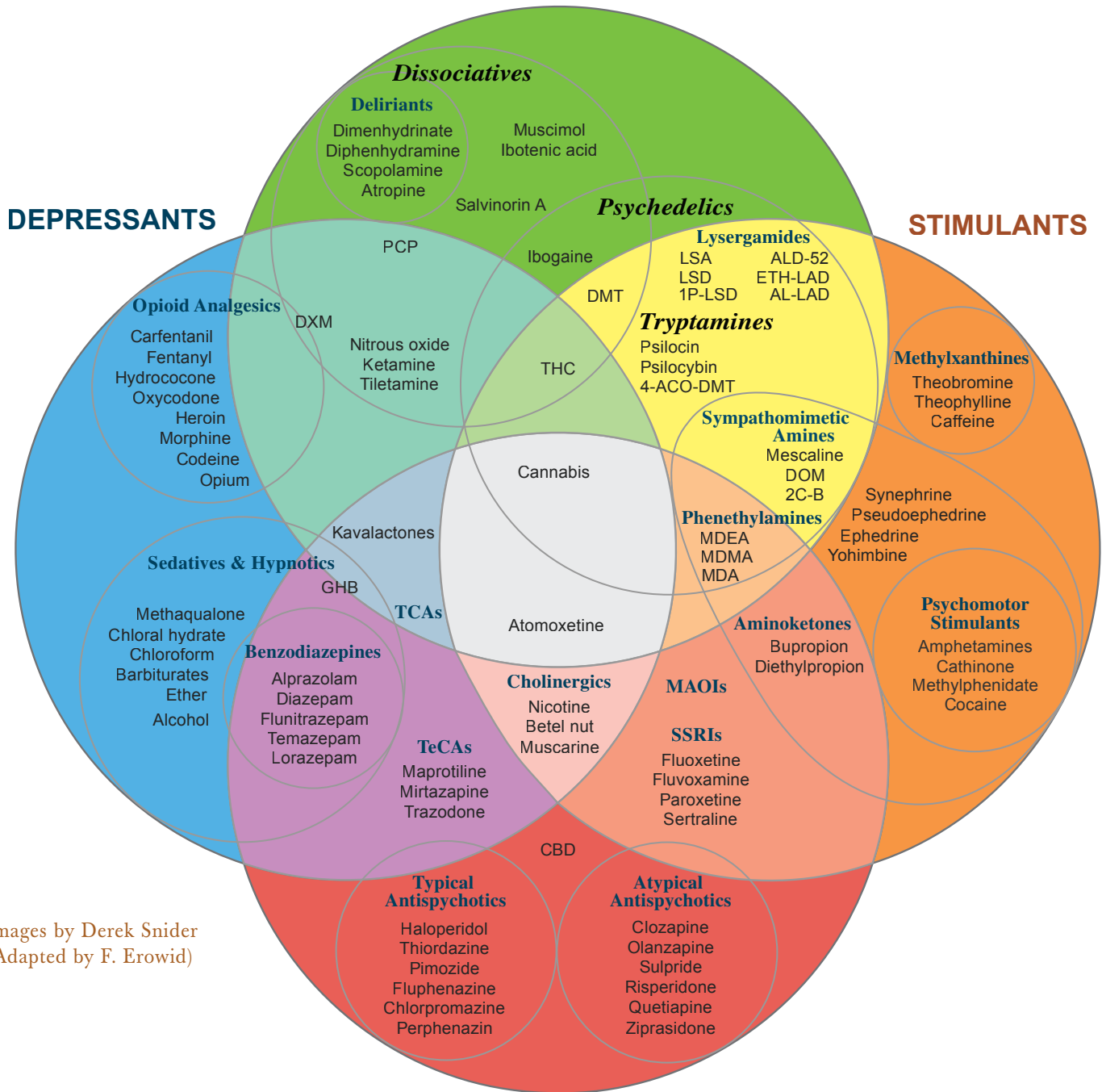
Though we at Erowid tend towards prosaic lists and tables of data, Derek Snider's Venn diagram (below and right) is a good example of an attempt to represent relationships between mind-altering substances. It blends together aspects of pharmacology,



target uses, structures, metabolism, and experiential effects as the criteria for placement in the design. Many others have attempted their own visualizations, some derived from Snider's work.

Such graphical depictions can help spark debate and discussion. Where would you put cannabis? How is LSD like methamphetamine? How are they different? Where in the Venn diagram does α -PVP go? It's a drug-geek party game: What's Like What? ●

HALLUCINOGENS



Images by Derek Snider
(Adapted by F. Erowid)

by Derek Snider

In 2003, I was taking part in a discussion on the USENET group alt.drugs.psychedelics, looking for feedback on how to classify hallucinogens into subcategories. The terms “psychedelic”, “dissociative”, “deliriant”, “stimulant”, and “depressant” were widely used, but I felt no one had tried to identify what drugs were in those groups, nor where those groups were in relationship to each other. I wanted a visual-spatial model.

My categorization was based, in part, on William A. McKim’s *Drugs and Behavior*, in which the author had lumped together all the hallucinogens. I’d never seen anyone try this sort of chart, so I worked to place substances based on their pharmacology, their relation to similar substances, and my understanding of their effects from experience reports.

First, I made a rough chart with three outer category groupings and sent that

draft as an ASCII drawing to the group. Next, I assembled a proper black and white Venn diagram and then a more advanced color version. Along the way, I showed it to Sasha Shulgin (and Earth Erowid) before adding it to Wikipedia where it was seen by thousands of people and subsequently removed because they don’t allow “original research”. One can now find dozens of modified versions of this diagram online, made by other people. ○

WHAT'S ON BLOTTER?



25B-NBOH Blotter—Photo by BerryTone



ALD-52 Blotter—Photo by Erowid



Fentanyl Blotter—Photo by ThizzKat

The Pineapple Miracle

Perhaps the biggest news in 2018 is that Erowid had the largest and most successful fundraising drive in its history!

It began on December 14, 2017 when a colleague from the Mycological Society of San Francisco pointed out pineapplefund.org, where an anonymous person was giving away 5,057 bitcoins (BTC) (87 million USD at the time) to non-profits.

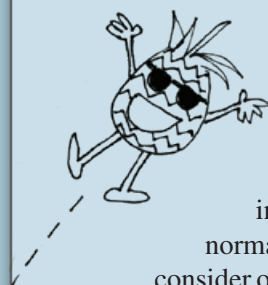
At the site, there was a short web application and a list of six organizations that had already received contributions, including the Electronic Frontier Foundation, OpenBSD, and MAPS. Within a few hours Fire filled out the application, selecting “\$500,000” from the drop-down for the requested grant size, and then we waited. And waited.

As of January 8 we hadn't heard any news. Ten additional organizations had been listed as recipients. Then the eponymous philanthropist calling themselves “Pine” posted on Reddit listing three new grantees, and saying the Pineapple Fund had gotten more than 10,000 applications. Pine was “still going through them” and would have more to announce in two days. An Erowid volunteer pointed out the Reddit post, and it reminded us of early 2015 when a volunteer rallied us to try for the \$82,765.95 Reddit Charity Giveaway that, with three days of full-bore effort, we were able to win.

Late that evening, realizing that perhaps we could tip the scales before the opportunity was over, we asked four accomplished friends of Erowid (each a star in a different field) to write endorsement emails and send them to Pine.

On the morning of Jan 10 (at 4:20 AM), we received an email from Pine saying that they had just transferred 18 BTC (worth \$250,000 at the moment of transfer) to Erowid Center! It was the largest single donation we'd ever received, and almost a year's budget.

Pine's public announcement of the grant to Erowid Center was accompanied by the announcement of a matching challenge for MAPS, ending on March 10. We leapt boldly into a type of pushy fundraising we don't normally do and asked the Pineapple Fund to consider offering Erowid a matching challenge as well. We proposed a dollar for dollar match up to \$125,000.



“I still don't believe real money has changed my life, more money than I can ever use, and motivations in life with having xx million dollars. So I'm doing something for the majority of my bitcoins. I'm calling it 🍍 The Pi

On Sunday morning, Jan 14, Pine offered us a matching grant and upped the amount to \$250,000. That increased the maximum donation from the Pineapple Fund to \$500,000 in BTC and the maximum from the entire drive to \$750,000, more than two years of Erowid's annual budget.

We were super excited, but also well aware of how much work it would be to raise \$250,000 in qualifying donations. It was the middle of winter in the US, just after the big annual push for end-of-year donations.



...ility sometimes. Bitcoin
... and I have far more
... spend. My aims, goals,
... we have nothing to do
... or being the mega rich.
... ng else: donating the
... s to charitable causes.
... neapple Fund." —Pine

Soon, other challenges layered on in a positive but stressful period that Earth named The Flaming Toboggan Ride & Portage. Fire and Earth both had a bad flu lasting most of January. On the day we received word of the matching challenge, Fire was too sick to get out of bed. Then, Erowid was "evicted" from its office/library space and we were instead offered the lease on a much better unit just across the parking lot. But, we needed to be fully moved out by Jan 30!

We needed to paint and clean the new space, build new shelving, box up Erowid's books and materials, and move it all. The neighboring gym came to the rescue. In an

intense two hours, a team of 20 people huffed across the parking lot with Erowid's entire library, cheered on by their trainers.

Pine's initial donation had come in the somewhat problematic form of bitcoins. We struggled to figure out how to cash out \$400–500,000 in BTC as the price was dropping. We'd had several ways to sell BTC in the past, but never at the volume now required. The increased trading led to our main cryptocurrency trading account getting locked down due to "unusual activity". Administrators were unswayed by the *New York Times* stories documenting Pine's amazing donations.

Eventually, we got another trading company to increase our daily transaction limit so that we could sell what we needed, and the terror of tracking the ups and downs of bitcoin price subsided.

In six hard weeks of fundraising, and thanks to all of you who contributed during the drive, we successfully raised \$250,000, which was matched with another \$250,000 worth of BTC. This will have a huge impact on Erowid and the world! You're amazing, Pine. ●



Max America Bequest

In 2014 we met an exuberant man named Max America at Sasha Shulgin's memorial service. He described how valuable he thought Erowid was and said he'd like to make a donation to support the project. Later, we had dinner with him and he encouraged us to rally to get out to Black Rock City that year.

A few weeks later, we met up with him at Burning Man and spent most late afternoons sipping champagne in his purple RV while chatting about drugs, music, and art.

We lost track of Max for a year, but texted him one day and were asked to call him "right away". He invited us to his home in Nevada, where he'd moved to be closer to Burning Man. He said it was important, so we drove over the Sierras for dinner at his log palace-in-progress.

The news was that he'd been diagnosed with terminal cancer and didn't have long to live. He made another contribution and re-introduced us to a mutual friend, Ranger Twilight, who as it turned out, would be the executor of his estate.



Max was a complicated character; we very much enjoyed his big ideas and wild tales, though we often weren't sure what

to make of him. As he was fading, the Erowid crew had a global synchronous champagne toast to Max and sent him the photos. He died on June 18, 2016.

Helping to fulfill a last request, later that summer we joined other friends of Max's in a small procession to the temple at Burning Man, where we left his ashes at the pyre of the community he'd loved so much.

In 2017, after a herculean effort by Twilight to liquidate Max's complex assets and create a trust to distribute them, Erowid began receiving \$10,500 quarterly donations from Max's estate. Much thanks to both Max and Twilight for this show of support! ●

Bob Wallace Legacy

We're dedicating this issue of *Erowid Extracts* to Bob Wallace, who inspired the creation of Erowid's Experience Vaults and contributed both ideas and funding to help make it happen.

Bob was the first to suggest that we should focus on Erowid instead of having it be a 40-hour-per-week "hobby". On April 1, 1998, Bob Wallace gave Erowid its first donation, \$3,000. With further support from Bob, Fire took on Erowid as her career in 1999.

Though Bob died in September 2002, he's never far from our thoughts. While he didn't have a will, his widow Megan has made several generous donations since his death. As we move into Erowid's new library/office space, it's fun to finally be able to unpack some of the last boxes of books we got from Bob's library. ●

VERBATIM

“The black moment is the moment when the real message of transformation is going to come. At the darkest moment comes the light.”

— Joseph Campbell (1904–1987)

“A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within...”

— Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882)

“In my mind, I clearly saw a brilliant and massive white light, all encompassing, with billions of smaller lights moving into it, and others moving back out. I saw the true nature and cycle of life unfold before me.”

— MindTripper (Exp8732)

“In the right light, at the right time, everything is extraordinary.”

— Aaron Rose (b. 1969)

“There are two kinds of light—the glow that illumines, and the glare that obscures.”

— James Thurber (1894–1961)

“Insanity is relative. It depends on who has who locked in what cage.”

— Ray Bradbury (1920–2012)

“The scientists of today think deeply instead of clearly. One must be sane to think clearly, but one can think deeply and be quite insane.”

— Nikola Tesla (1856–1943)

“To experience real agony is something hard to write about, impossible to understand while it grips you; you’re frightened out of your wits, can’t sit still, move, or even go decently insane.”

— Charles Bukowski (1920–1994)

“Whoever’s calm and sensible is insane!”

— Jalaluddin Rumi (1207–1273)

“If you think anyone is sane you just don’t know enough about them.”

— Christopher Moore (b. 1957)

“Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.”

— Martin Luther King Jr. (1929–1968)

*Daß alle unsere
Erkenntnis mit der
Erfahrung anfangt, daran
ist gar kein Zweifel...*

[That all our knowledge
begins with experience
is totally beyond doubt...]

— Immanuel Kant (1724–1804)

“When you make a choice, you change the future.”

— Deepak Chopra (b. 1947)

“History is not made by cynics. It is made by realists unafraid to dream.”

— Shimon Peres (1923–2016)

“Your dreaming self seeks to tell you something your waking ears will not hear.”

— Jacqueline Carey (b. 1964)

“Phosphorescence. Now there’s a word to lift your hat to... to find that phosphorescence, that light within, that’s the genius behind poetry.”

— Emily Dickinson (1830–1886)

“It may be that you are not yourself luminous, but that you are a conductor of light. Some people without possessing genius have a remarkable power of stimulating it.”

— Arthur Conan Doyle (1859–1930)

“I had been completely delusional for the last few hours. I had intended to have a fun exciting trip, but then ended becoming totally insane. I had been so happy to finally understand the universe, but now realized none of it had been real.”

— SlipKnot420 (Exp41750)

“No great mind has ever existed without a touch of madness.”

— Aristotle (384–322 BCE)

“As if I were not a man who sleeps at night and often has all the same experiences while asleep as madmen do when awake—indeed sometimes even more improbable ones. Often in my dreams I am convinced of just such familiar events—that I am sitting by the fire in my dressing-gown—when in fact I am lying undressed in bed!”

— René Descartes (1596–1650)

“In the light, we read the inventions of others; in the darkness we invent our own stories.”

— Alberto Manguel (b. 1948)

“Imagination is the only weapon in the war against reality.”

— Lewis Carroll (1832–1898)

“There is nothing like a dream to create the future.”

— Victor Hugo (1802–1885)

“It is a happiness to wonder; —it is a happiness to dream.”

— Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849)