zarkov and gracie are two notorious acidheads with almost 20 years experience in the areas of mythology, philosophy, psychoactive drugs, cosmology and irreverence. they currently fund their private researches by holding down jobs as investment bankers with large corporations. the results of these researches occasionally appear in self-published pamphlets under the general title "notes from underground." recently, high frontier sponsored a gathering so that gracie and zarkov could indulge themselves in their favorite pastime... talking about these topics. some of the more interesting and outlandish anecdotes appear below.

zarkov: the most unreported and son of the world's greatest experience. we've had was on mushrooms postulated by harmala alkaloids. based on the plant we used, we estimate that we had about 180-200 milligrams of mixed harmala alkaloids which we each took with 7.5 grams of dried aoraphia caesarea mushrooms. it was an experience where the mushroom visions got brighter and brighter. then, when we got to the part of the visions were unbearable, i was able to move around within the vision space. finally, i entered into the vision itself, so that i was part of the vision. the interesting thing is that the characteristics of the vision were unchanged. the visions were still psilocybin visions. it was almost as if the harmala had provided a beautiful stage and lighting, built the auditorium, and then the mushroom provided the stage direction, plot and some of the characters.

the experience included visions of about 50 or 60 different alien worlds. sometimes there was a soundtrack. sometimes there was a voice-over discussion. and sometimes there was an argument that went along with the visions. i was free to move around in any particular world or i was free to, in effect, rip the curtain of the vision and walk through to another world. the trip was a series of visions after vision where i was trying to make direct contact with whatever was in charge of the visions.

on that particular trip i did succeed in having a direct vision of the mushroom satelites or a direct conversation with the voices that terence [mckenna] talks about. however, on a succeeding trip, i did. i mean an experience of the literal, walk-right-into-your-livingroom, stand-there-and-talk-to-you variety. only when you look around, you aren't in your livingroom anymore.

harmala alkaloids occur in several plants, for example, syrian rue, which, used in combination with psilocybin mushrooms, could have been the source of the ancient's. we've been doing some reading in greek literature just this week and there seems to be reference among some of the healing cults to the use of pygarrum harmala (cyanea rue), the best known use of harmala is in yaqi or ayahuasca in south america. it is used alone, but it seems to be that in the most interesting visions, it is used with other tryptamines, primarily dmmt-containg plants.

we are quite interested in this area of research and have additional harmala experiments planned for the fall.

gracie: i had a similar experience on that combination in terms of choosing among a selection of visions, but what was interesting to me was that starting with that particular combination and with subsequent mushroom trips, we had our first fally-coupled trips. that is, we were getting exactly the same material at the same time. however, after we get it in different forms, for instance, i'll be seeing something and zarkov will get the dialogue...
z&g continued

gracie: for example, in my case I have
used a trance technique with mda and lsd
to confront maternal programs, i get
visions of how my mother treated me, how
i reacted to my mother, and had a full
giving-birth-to-myself experience. the
visions and ideational content were such
that i could apply that information to fixing
behavior that was obviously neurotic.
behaviors based on misunderstandings that
developed at this particular point in my
personal history.

zarkov: a technical note: we usually start
with 100-300 micrograms of lsd. upon
feeling first effects, we take 75-125
milligrams of mda, since mda is often cut,
this refers to pure mda. the mda-led
combination structures the personal.
information that you often get fleeting
glimpses of on lsd alone, the mda makes it
directly personal and puts it into a context
that you can relate to.

the testability of all this strange stuff is
"can you use it?" we've never gotten
voices saying, saying "you were the high
priest of atlantis." it's fairly mundane
and believable, yet, when it's information about
yourself or your friends, it's psychological
and behavioral insights that you had been
unable to obtain otherwise, by putting
these insights or directions, so to speak,
into action, they work! i mean they work
in the everyday world, you apply these
insights by behaving that way to your
friends and the specific problems that you
were having disappear and you are a
happier human being.

gracie: it's [mda-led] an oracular sort of
approach, you develop your mind set and
setting—you ask the question, about the
problem you are trying to solve, then you
can go in seeking whatever dirty or entity
will show up to give you information or
show you useful answers.

zarkov: our familiarity with mda came
about via a picarese route. we used to
be associated with a variety of sex clubs.
one of the most popular drug combinations
at parties was mda and speed or mda and
cocaine.

gracie: mda and cocaine, a terrible
combination! blah! what you get is the
friendliest dinosaur you ever saw in your
life, you take this ridiculous tyrannosaurus rex
and make him cuddly and erotic and
you've got the idea. i remember a scene
involving someone in a monacle, a white
silk scarf, a nazi helmet and a cockring
... truly bizarre.

zarkov: mda can make you feel erotic, the
neuropsychical side effects of mda are
similar to the neuropsychical effects of
sexual arousal, it also causes, particularly
in women, water retention, especially in
the breasts and buttocks, it's also a drug
that confuses you enough so that when
your body says "...well, physically i feel
like i feel when i'm turned on..." your
mind replies, "i must be turned on." at
the same time, it makes everything, especially
other people, appear much more beautiful,
so if you're in a sexual setting, like a sex
party, the results can be amazing, the first
time i witnessed the mass consumption of
mda at a sex party, a usually relatively shy
woman stood up and said, "there are
six horny, hopped-up women in the hot tub
and we hope there are some men who
want to fuck us!" to lead the party off.
that sort of behavior in the right setting is
not atypical of mda and amfurs.

one warning, however, all methylated
amphetamines—mda, mdm, amfusa, etc.—
are fairly poisonous, depending on who
you believe and which drug, the lethal
dose is between 500-1600 milligrams,
there is also considerable individual
variation, so be careful!

one of the things that we have found is
that the more psychedelic each substance
is by itself, the more interesting the
effects when you combine them, when you
got to some of the later shaman drugs that
are more specific in terms of action, these
drugs became less interesting, at least to
us, we would like the widest range of
effects that we have a chance of
controlling.

gracie: i talked before about developing
your set and setting, we used a variety of
self-developed rituals to modify the
setting, we use music, i use dancing a lot.
it's a question of personal preference.
since we both have strong musical
backgrounds, we've used music to
structure trips or to provide a framework
within which the more profound effects
can take place, it can be used as a
control, if things get particularly freaky or
wild, my dancing grows out of the drugs
and the music, in my case dancing is a
way of conjuring up entities, of using it as
a way of putting myself in an altered state
of consciousness on top of the drug or in
addition to the drug to produce a
predictable possession or entity-contact
type effects.
a bit of dmt 10/9/84—zarkov

I headed about 40-50 milligrams of dmt into a glass pipe on top of a small amount of damiana. even though i had been warned, i was still shocked at how harsh the first toke was. it tasted and smelled like burning plastic. i involuntarily exhaled. i immediately took a second toke, the heavy white smoke rushed up the pipe as harsh as before, but i was somewhat better prepared for the terrible taste and i was able to hold the smoke for a few seconds. i exhaled, took a third toke, and was able to hold this last lungful, suddenly i began to hear a loud, moderately high-pitched carrier wave. immediately, the room started vibrating in sympathy, the pattern on the wall hangings oscillated oddly in time to the buzzing that overlaid the carrier wave's fundamental tone. simultaneously, a heavy, trembling feeling swept over my entire body as if i were being propelled at multiple g acceleration by some giant rocket engine. my visual field dissolved into the most amazing colors. i could not see the room over the intensity of the visual effects. the events of the preceding paragraph occurred in the space of a few short seconds.

closing my eyes, i got a glimpse of several entities moving in front of a giant complex control panel. the visions were not crystal clear and seemed as if i were viewing it through a scrim. the creatures were bipedal and of about human size. it was impossible to say more than that they did not move like the giant insect creatures i have seen clearly under the influence of psilocybin mushrooms. there was a direct awareness of an overwhelmingly powerful and knowledgeable presence. it was neither frightening, nor encouraging, it was just mentally there, a thought come, unbidden, into my head. i realized that i was viewing "god central." the control panel i saw was the control panel for the entire universe. the vision was fleeting and dissolved into a vision of much greater clarity, a gaggle of all-dressed in a standard issue irish eli, costumes, complete with hats, looking like they had stepped out of a hallmark cards "happy saint patrick's day" display, were doing strange things with strange objects that seemed to be a weird hybrid between crystals and machines. the vision was also fleeting, and it dissolved into a visual pattern unlike that experienced by me on any other psychedelic or combination of psychedelics. the visuals were interlocking sinuous patterns arranged in a japanese chrysanthemum pattern that filled my entire visual field, the pattern was ever-changing and the colors of the individual patterns changed independently of the underlying pattern. the colors were intense and came in a magnificent variety of colors: metallics, monochromes, pastels, each flickering in and out of existence as if obeying some undetected ordering principle. an idea came into my head that i was seeing the "true universe" or universe as it really exists. that is to say, i was seeing directly the vibrations of every particle in the universe that "i" was somehow in contact with. "i" was directly "seeing" the universe without ordering it into an arbitrary reality tunnel—i.e., perceived "solid, objective reality," the visual pattern seemed to be a sort of m-dimensional lensoplane curve formed by the intersection of a shock wave of space-time causality. the carrier wave remained strong throughout the experience. while i was seeing the same type of phenomena as the carrier wave heard under the influence of psilocybin mushrooms, the dmt carrier wave was much louder than even the loud carrier wave heard under the influence of ten grams of very potent, dried stropharia mushrooms. also, by comparison to the mushroom experience, the carrier wave sounded as a "pure" tone—i.e., the sinuous component dominated the buzzing remained intense. i never felt the preordaining that the harsh smoke and the control of my breathing was hindered by the intensity of the experience, so i was unable to sing or even generate a solid tone, to attempt audio driving of the visuals. the overwhelming sense of a presence did not disappear when the vision changed to visual patterns, but remained an almost palpable entity as long as the visuals lasted—let alone the direct challenges—i have felt under the influence of stropharia mushrooms whenever the feeling of contact with the presence has been strong, the presence was just there and very powerful. i felt that i had glimpsed whitehead's god. the period of intense visuals lasted about eight minutes. the side effects remained unpleasant, but easily ignorable, the dmt left me euphoric and very bemused for about an hour. definitely far out and very impressive.