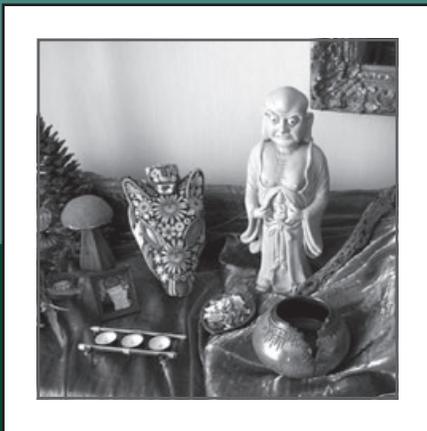
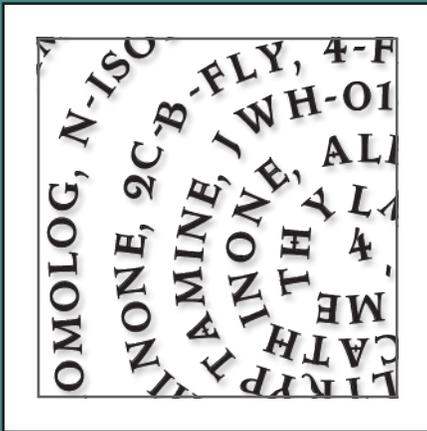


Erowid Extracts

DOCUMENTING THE COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HUMANS AND PSYCHOACTIVES

June 2010

Number 18



"We are here and it is now: further than that all human knowledge is moonshine."

— H. L. Mencken



Connecting the Microdots: The State of the Stone 2010 • Mephedrone Reports
Psychedelic Science Conference • Digital Archive Policy • Psychedelic Emergence Kit

As a pharmacist/toxicologist who works at a poison center, I find your site a valuable resource. Keep up the great work. I would be happy to donate some of my professional time as well if you would like my input on anything.

— C.A. DESLAURIERS, PHARMD, DABAT
Email to Erowid

Thank you in abundance for the service you offer, surely with love for your fellow humans. Yours is, in my opinion, one of the greatest things to ever arise out of the Internet. I have benefited greatly and cannot thank you enough. Just wanted to let you know that you have made the world a better place.

— Z
Email to Erowid

From helping us find our participants to providing important details [...], your network has been instrumental in the shaping and creating of this film. We're so appreciative of all the guidance and contacts you gave us throughout this project. Thank you.

It might also be nice for you to know that almost all our participants praised your organization as a wonderful and important resource for the psychedelic community. Now we know firsthand how true that is.

— NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC TELEVISION
Feedback about assistance with Explorer's documentary Inside LSD

As a long-time Erowid.org reader and researcher (really) and now proud supporter, I want to give you this feedback. I have watched this ORG struggle, through thick and thin, to become the great harm reduction/accurate informational source on the net that you have become! We have all, as a society, benefited greatly from the many hours of sometimes grueling hard work and tireless effort by ALL staff, past and present! As the Hermetic axiom As Above, So Below implies, Knowledge is Power & Power is Knowledge!

— JOSEPH F.
Email to Erowid

Thank you for granting everyone access to the truth. Without the truth a real choice cannot be made. For the sake of harm reduction alone, your site and information is thus a priceless resource because it liberates people to make informed choices. We should be proud to live in a country that allows for web sites like yours, but I am not always proud of our government for waging war against people who seek to alter their experience of the world.

— AKS
WA, USA

The following is a small sampling of comments left about Erowid on Facebook during the Chase Community Giving contest (see page 24).

In addition to its vast store of valuable information, Erowid is (in my humble librarian opinion) one of the most comprehensive and well-built digital libraries of any sort on the Internet. It remains one of the best resources of its kind—not just for its more well-known information about entheogens and the like, but also for its excellent content on spirituality, religions, and culture, and the need to protect our personal and collective freedoms.

— JENNY Z.

I trust this site with my life and the lives of the people I know. Thank you for making a place with real info based on real science. You have saved my life many times.

— KYLE H.

Erowid is one source of information that has helped me develop a "Less is More" philosophy about life.

— STEPHEN K.

In a world where lies hide truth, we need to support websites like Erowid. They are giving us unbiased information on subjects that are looked down upon by lots of people.

— THOMAS N.

Erowid is my bible, plain and simple.

— MAX B.

In the context of our culture's "just say no" attitude, Erowid Center is a particularly crucial resource. The ubiquity of drug use is so obvious, having been present in every human society with access to psychoactive plants (and even in the animal kingdom), that it may ultimately represent a basic human drive. Absolute sobriety may not be a natural or primary human condition, but to engage in consciousness alteration safely requires access to uncensored, thorough, non-judgmental information on how to do so. Over the last decade, Erowid has set a new standard for providing that information, and richly deserves our donations and utmost gratitude.

— ERIK L.

Thank you Erowid! You have saved the lives of countless people and friends (as well as myself). The experience vaults, in my eyes, are the most important. If you read enough of them without bias, and read a good variety of both positive AND negative experiences, you will find that your personal insight will be greatly enhanced. Instead of hearing what a drug is like from a drug dealer, you will have a much better idea as to what you're getting yourself into. Reading about people recovering has greatly helped my personal drug recovery and gives me more information to pass on to people still going down that road.

— GREGORY M.

Send correspondence to:

extracts@erowid.org

Please include your name, title, and city/state/country of origin to be published with your letter.

Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

ERRATA

Artwork by Actual Contact appearing on page 5 of the last issue was incorrectly titled "F". This piece is actually untitled.

Table of Contents

Letters & Feedback	☼
Recent News & Updates.....	2
Mephedrone Law.....	2
Jack Herer	2
2009 U.S. Pharmaceutical Usage.....	2
The Name Game: Mislabeling of Unscheduled Compounds	3
Conference Report: Psychedelic Science in the 21 st Century.....	4
I Think I'll Have More: Mephedrone Experience Excerpts	8
Mystical Insight & Drugs: Book Recommendations.....	10
Connecting the Microdots: The State of the Stone 2010.....	12
The Teafærie: Psychedelic Emergence Kit.....	19
Erowid Center Policy Statement: Digitization of Archives	20
Erowid Archiving Project Updates.....	21
The Distillation	22
The Shulgin Index.....	23
Two-Faced Chase.....	24
EcstasyData Gets a Booster	25

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.

Subscriptions: To become a member and subscribe to *Erowid Extracts*, visit:
<http://erowid.org/membership/>

Change of Address: To update your mailing address, use the form at:
https://erowid.org/donations/donations_update_address.php

Cancellations: To cancel your subscription, contact: extracts@erowid.org

Reprints: To request permission to reproduce an article or image from this newsletter, contact: copyrights@erowid.org

Advertising: *Erowid Extracts* does not accept advertisements, but if you would like to include a flier about a related organization or event in our mailings, contact: extracts@erowid.org

Cover Image Credits: 1) Chemical Name Spiral—Fire Erowid; 2) Six-Product Grid—Fire Erowid; 3) Hospitality Room Altar—Earth Erowid; 4) Carpet Bag—Unknown; 5) Research Chemical Logo—Earth Erowid; 6) Conference Entrance Hall—Fire Erowid; 7) Pherenol Name Tag—Fire Erowid

Erowid Extracts

Number 18, June 2010

Founder, Editor in Chief	Fire Erowid
Founder, Executive Editor	Earth Erowid
Managing Editor	Sylvia Thyssen
Managing Editor	Jon Hanna

Crew

Bläk, JL, Psilo, Stu,
Plutonic, Zhah, Jickmagger

Associate Editors

Zachawry, Polaris, Katherine, Scotto

Experience Report Reviewers

Antheia, Peregrine, Kernel, Tforceimaj

Experience Report Triagers

LotN, Mujo Lila, Shiitake, Azgaza, ScAb13
Water, Prometheus, Sugarmagnoliagirl,
Atheist, Harmony, Whiterook, Ydl,
RevMeo, Keith, Hazyzy, Fnord

Erowid Extracts is the members' newsletter of Erowid Center. It has been published twice a year since May 2001. If you are interested in receiving this newsletter or supporting Erowid Center's educational mission, visit:

<http://erowid.org/donations/>

Past issues can be read online at:

<http://erowid.org/extracts/>

Erowid Center
PO Box 1116
Grass Valley, CA 95945
<http://www.erowid.org>
info@erowid.org

ISSN 1548-8071

© 2010 Erowid.org

Erowid is a ® Registered Trademark
All rights reserved

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

Recent News & Updates

Mephedrone Law

4-Methylmethcathinone (aka mephedrone, 4-MMC, meow-meow, m-cat), a research chemical stimulant that became very popular in Britain and Ireland in 2008 and 2009, has now been formally controlled in several countries.

After an enormous amount of media attention in the United Kingdom, the British Home Office added it to the list of Class B drugs on April 16, 2010, alongside drugs such as cannabis, amphetamine, and codeine. More than two dozen deaths in Europe have been linked to mephedrone, though a summary report by Britain's Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) from March 26, 2010 states that only one of the deaths has been confirmed to be a result of mephedrone ingestion.

Other countries that have recently controlled 4-methylmethcathinone include Belgium (April 2010), the Netherlands (March 2010), and Germany (January 2010). Denmark, Finland, Israel, and Sweden had previously banned it, and some other countries' existing laws controlled its sale and possession. In the United States it would likely be considered a controlled substance analog if intended for human consumption.

One interesting element of the media coverage in the U.K. has been the meta-discussion of the fast-paced introduction of new psychoactive drugs into the international markets, and whether or not the best regulatory choice is to ban each of the new drugs in turn.

In the wake of the late 2009 firing of David Nutt, Britain's senior drug advisor, six members of the ACMD have quit. Two resigned in April 2010, partially due to how the Home Office handled the mephedrone issue, saying that the desire to please ministers or the press was overriding scientific and medical considerations. David Nutt continues to cause controversy, provocatively stating that handing out mephedrone to partygoers would be safer than forcing them to buy it on the black market. ●

Jack Herer

(June 18, 1939 – April 15, 2010)

Renowned cannabis activist Jack Herer passed away in April, due to complications related to a heart attack he suffered in September 2009. With coauthor Al Emmanuel, Herer produced his first book in 1973, *G.R.A.S.S.: Great Revolutionary American Standard System*. Since that time, he devoted his life to the study of cannabis, promoting its many uses and exposing the roots of prohibition—including its racist origins, how it benefits special interest groups, and governmental lies. In 1985, Herer published *The Emperor Wears No Clothes*, a loose, ranting manifesto about the history of cannabis and the worldwide “conspiracy against marijuana”. Heavily illustrated with news clippings, comics, and artwork, it became a popular book: released in eleven editions and translated into multiple languages, it has sold over 600,000 copies. Herer also founded the organization Help End Marijuana Prohibition (HEMP). In 1994, Amsterdam's Sensi Seed Bank introduced the “Jack Herer” strain at the Cannabis Cup to honor his accomplishments in the field.

For his cannabis work, Herer was sometimes referred to as the Emperor of Hemp or the Hemperor. Truly believing it to be the single thing that could save the planet, he was an impassioned, entertaining motivational speaker who rattled facts and figures off the top of his head, in contrast to the popular caricature of the befuddled stoner with a bad memory. Arguing that cannabis “is the best thing the world has ever had”, he advocated smoking “morning, noon, and night” because of its positive effects on health.

Herer suffered a stroke in 2000, and it took him about four years to regain his ability to speak. But he never gave up fighting for his cause, and had been back on the lecture circuit promoting cannabis for the last few years. ●

2009 U.S. Pharmaceutical Usage

According to private data collected through IMS Health (a commercial information service), the top 24 most prescribed “psychiatric” pharmaceuticals in 2009 include three benzodiazepines, which were prescribed over 83 million times in the United States last year. Many of the top substances are modern antidepressants, though long-acting stimulants are also well represented. Notably, this list does not include psychoactive drugs that are not prescribed for psychiatric purposes, such as hydrocodone, which is the most prescribed pharmaceutical overall.

#	Substance	Prescriptions
1.	Alprazolam (Xanax)	44,029,000
2.	Escitalopram (Lexapro)	27,698,000
3.	Lorazepam (Ativan)	25,868,000
4.	Sertraline (Zoloft)	19,500,000
5.	Fluoxetine (Prozac)	19,499,000
6.	Trazodone (Desyrel)	18,873,000
7.	Duloxetine (Cymbalta)	16,626,000
8.	Quetiapine (Seroquel)	15,814,000
9.	Venlafaxine (Effexor)	14,992,000
10.	Diazepam (Valium)	14,009,000
11.	Amphetamine (Generic)	10,794,000
12.	Risperidone (Risperdal)	10,590,000
13.	Hydroxyzine (Vistaril)	9,770,000
14.	Bupropion (Generic)	8,981,000
15.	Aripiprazole (Abilify)	8,209,000
16.	Methylphenidate (Concerta)	8,098,000
17.	Citalopram (Celexa)	7,215,000
18.	Buspirone (Buspar)	5,455,000
19.	Lisdexamfetamine (Vyvanse)	5,437,000
20.	Olanzapine (Zyprexa)	5,379,000
21.	Amphetamine and dextroamphetamine (Adderall)	5,255,000
22.	Bupropion (Wellbutrin XL)	3,021,000
23.	Ziprasidone (Geodon)	3,012,000
24.	Atomoxetine (Strattera)	2,919,000

SOURCE: International Marketing Services (IMS) National Sales Perspectives. Aside from summaries, there is no publicly available version of this information. Even the FDA purchases this data from IMS, and their license agreement does not allow them to distribute it publicly. ●

The Name Game

Mislabeled of Unscheduled Compounds

by Jon Hanna



The recreational psychoactives market is ever-changing, with new compounds and products constantly entering the limelight. Last year, a member of the Erowid Expert Network contacted us with a question: “I’ve been hearing about a new drug craze in certain sexy circles in LA, but I can’t find any info on the Internet. Do you know what *pherenol* is? People say it’s even better than E. I’ve been told that it is a liquid. It lasts about 90 minutes. Taking too much leads to passing out and vomiting. For some, it’s a powerful aphrodisiac...”

There is very little information available about “pherenol”. However, its effect profile, combined with some street knowledge, allow for reasonable speculation that it is likely gamma-butyrolactone, or GBL (a precursor chemical of GHB that, when consumed, metabolizes into GHB).¹

Misbranding and/or claiming that synthetic products come from natural sources is far from uncommon on the grey market.

Mislabeled an existing substance under a different name and passing it off as a “new drug” is, alas, commonplace. In 1996, when FDA furor and anti-drug media hype related to GHB was building to a fever pitch, a “new” product hit the streets. Called “Borametz”, it had effects very similar to GHB and was marketed as a natural substitute. The producer claimed it was extracted from an obscure Russian evergreen tree. Testing showed that it was actually synthetically produced 1,4-butanediol,² a prodrug that is converted in the body into GHB. Around the same time, another product called “fX” was marketed as a kava kava extract; it too contained 1,4-butanediol. Before long, GBL also hit the market in assorted products, with the active ingredient often obfuscated; this

process continues, over a decade later. In the United States, GHB was federally scheduled in 1999, GBL became a List 1 chemical in 2000, and 1,4-butanediol is not currently scheduled (although it has been treated as a controlled substance analog in criminal cases).³

Misbranding and/or claiming that synthetic products come from natural sources is far from uncommon on the grey market. In the early 1990s, Isis Health Foods of South Africa marketed their product “Nexus” by claiming it contained 10 mg of either “cathinine” [sic] or “brominated cathinine” [sic]. (Later sold under the name “Erox”, the description was changed to “brominated phenethylamine”.) The packaging waxed rhapsodic about the “energizing and empathogenic properties” of the African khat bush (*Catha edulis*). Independent lab analysis showed Nexus to be pure 2C-B, which had not yet been scheduled.

“Herbal Ecstasy” was one of the more widely distributed “legal highs” marketed in the mid-1990s. Although the product listed the plant *Ephedra* as an ingredient, laboratory testing suggested that it had also been spiked with pharmaceutical ephedrine. The FDA and FTC cracked down on Herbal Ecstasy in 1996 and 1997 because it was illegally being marketed as a drug without FDA approval.

In the 2000s, Ergopharm’s product “AMP” listed their trademarked “Geranamine” as one of its ingredients. Supposedly coming from geranium oil, Geranamine turned out to be methylhexanamine (aka dimethylpentylamine). Despite being very unlikely that this chemical—available in assorted bodybuilding products—comes from natural sources, to date the FDA has not banned it.

In more recent years, the grey market has seen a plethora of “herbal” smoking blends such as “Spice” and “K2”, which contain one or more unscheduled cannabinoid agonists. Although some arrests have been made, the laws are still largely cloudy; many countries and nearly all U.S. states have not yet specifically prohibited these novel compounds.^{4,5,6}

The current trend of selling unscheduled cathinone analogs as “plant food/fertilizer” is a new variation on this model. As with most such cases, the obfuscation tactic is not convincing for long, but can serve to divert law enforcement attention from an unscheduled compound or breathe new life into an older chemical.

In a prohibitionist environment, without regulatory oversight, profits from unscheduled drug sales eclipse truth in advertising. Misbranding and mislabeling of these sorts are likely to continue for the foreseeable future. *Caveat emptor!* ●

References

1. Various. “Pherenol? High similar to GHB...” *Bluelight.ru*. Thread started Jan 28, 2002. Accessed May 16, 2010 at: <http://bluelight.ru/vb/showthread.php?t=37693>.
2. Hanna J. “The Borametz Scam: Psychoactive Snake Oil”. *The Resonance Project*. Winter 1997/98;2:34–9.
3. *U.S. v. Mark R. Niemoeller*, No. IP 02-0009-CR 1 H/F. (S.D. Ind., Indianapolis Div.) May 17, 2004, Decided. (Related cases cited within this decision.)
4. Erowid E, Erowid F. “Spice & Spin-offs: Prohibition’s High-Tech Cannabis Substitutes”. *Erowid Extracts*. Jun 2009;16:12–6.
5. Hanna J. “Not in Kansas Anymore... Arresting Vendors of Grey Market Psychoactives”. *Erowid.org*. Mar 11, 2010. Accessed May 16, 2010. http://erowid.org/psychoactives/research_chems/research_chems_article1.shtml.
6. Erowid. Spice Product Legal Status. *Erowid.org*. Accessed May 16, 2010 at: http://erowid.org/chemicals/spice_product/spice_product_law.shtml.

PSYCHEDELIC SCIENCE in the 21st Century

MAPS' *Psychedelic Science in the 21st Century* conference (April 15–18, 2010, San Jose, California) was a great opportunity to learn about the current state of research into psychedelics and meet with others interested in this field. This bustling event was packed with more than 1,100 attendees and featured over 80 speakers.

Erowid Center ran an information booth at the conference, where we fielded questions related to psychoactives, registered new and renewing members, distributed flyers, and shared an advanced copy of Sasha Shulgin's forthcoming book *The Shulgin Index* (see page 23). Erowid also hosted a hospitality suite where members could relax and converse in a pleasing aesthetic environment. The suite was decked out chill space-style with elaborate altars, lots of pillows, and showcased paintings from the visionary artists *Actual Contact*, Tom Swanson, and *Vibrata Chromodoris*. Animated socials were held in the evenings, with snacks and drinks.

The following comments about the conference are from Erowid supporters and volunteers. Photos by Erowid. ●

Things I Wouldn't Have Known About if I'd Missed This Event

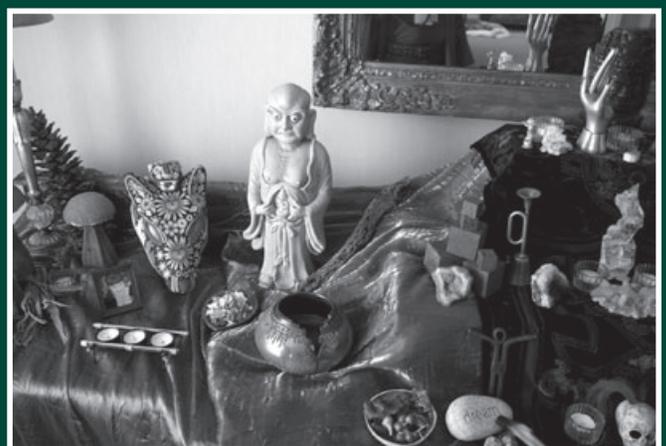
by MARK KLEIMAN

- 1) There's evidence that MDMA and MDE can help some people with autistic-spectrum disorders.
- 2) There's evidence that ultra-low (non-psychoactive) doses of a hallucinogen called DOI can interrupt the inflammatory process implicated in both allergy and auto-immune disorders such as lupus.
- 3) There's evidence that barely psychoactive doses of psilocybin can provide temporary relief from OCD symptoms in some patients.
- 4) The trials of MDMA in the treatment of refractory post-traumatic stress disorder and of psilocybin in helping people deal with possibly terminal illness are producing impressive results.
- 5) Lots and lots of serious science is going on, much of it using cutting-edge brain imaging, and younger scientists are starting to be willing to make career commitments to this long-marginalized research enterprise.
6. Procedures for "guiding" in therapeutic settings are currently becoming manualized.

I'm now prepared to bet that one of the classic hallucinogens (psilocybin, LSD, mescaline) or one of the entactogens (MDMA or MDE) will be an FDA-approved medicine before this decade is out. I wouldn't have made that bet five years ago. ●



Erowid information booth



Altar in Erowid hospitality suite

Thoughts on the Ayahuasca Track

by BEATRIZ CAIUBY LABATE
and CLANCY CAVNAR

The “ayahuasca track” was a mixture of health sciences, social sciences, and trip reports. Among tables, statistics, tough sociological debates, and prayers to Mother Earth, most rooms were at full capacity throughout the conference. The panels included topics such as ayahuasca as psychological therapy, its effect on cognition and mental health, its use in the treatments of addiction and cancer, its relationship to spirituality, arts and music, public policies governing its use, and so forth. The presenters—psychologists, psychiatrists, workshops facilitators, anthropologists, doctors, disciples, teachers, public policy administrators, writers, and even a politician—were mainly from the United States and Canada, but more distant places were also represented, including Brazil and Europe.

Some talks were not academic in nature, but rather reflections of the practitioners on their own experiences, or institutional presentations by ayahuasca retreat centers. In fact, these seemed to be the most popular talks in the track, eliciting questions such as: “I drank ayahuasca and felt pain, what does this mean?” “I took ayahuasca and slept, why does this happen?” “Why did I have such a vision?” “I had this trauma in my childhood and I wonder if taking

ayahuasca could help me overcome this?”, etc. This gave a strange flavor to a conference that identified itself as scientific and aimed to create political legitimacy for the use of psychedelic medicines. The awkward questions posed by the public underscored the lack of institutional or intellectual space to properly discuss the challenges of the worldwide expansion of ayahuasca use.

Although these parts of the track seemed to have a non-scientific, self-help spirit, one could argue that by accommodating such diverse audiences and presenters MAPS is helping to develop a culture of public education and awareness about the use of ayahuasca, while giving professionals such as psychotherapists a rich view of the concerns of individuals who use ayahuasca.

The ayahuasca track concluded with a packed meeting of researchers. At one point, a Shuar shaman spoke for a long time and played the flute. While some seemed enchanted, others left while he had the stage. The opposite reactions to the native man’s unexpected participation reflected the variety of interests present in the conference and exemplified its hybrid nature. ●

An Unresolved Question

by JONATHAN TAYLOR

It is a given that many conference attendees’ initial interest in psychedelics was sparked not by therapeutic or medical use, but by recreational use. It’s

also worth noting that most psychedelics are illegal because of recreational use, not because of therapeutic, medical, or even spiritual use. This contradiction persists.

We heard a variety of speakers discussing how MDMA and traditional psychedelics can be used as medical or therapeutic agents, while others addressed their sacramental use. But even if current research establishes some psychedelics as having medical, therapeutic, or spiritual utility, this does not mean that we will see any movement toward full legalization per se, as long as recreational use is still considered personally or socially harmful.

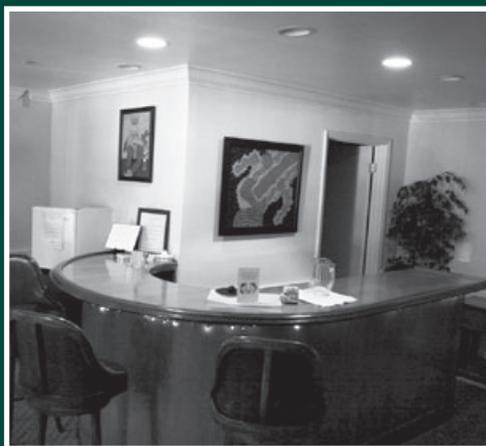
Nor is there unanimity among psychedelic researchers that broad-based legalization is the best approach. Some assert the principle of “cognitive liberty” while others worry about psychological, sociological, and physiological impacts of unsupervised, irresponsible, or prolonged use.

In this community, this debate exists even for cannabis, so imagine a discussion of what to do with a substance like ketamine, which clearly has medical utility, possibly has therapeutic utility, and is viewed by many psychonauts as being ontologically interesting, yet also has the potential for addiction.

What, then, is the best regulatory framework possible for psychedelic drugs? This question came into focus a number of times during the presentations, but few if any answers were proposed. ●



Art by Actual Contact



Art by Tom Swanson behind bar



Art by Vibrata Chromodoris

On the Cutting Edge

by SHELDON NORBERG

I arrived somewhat late the first day, but in time to be thoroughly impressed with Andrew Weil. His talk on the potentials of psychedelics was wide-ranging, funny, detailed, and totally extemporaneous. His wonderment at the thin segment of research being done, primarily around treating anxiety, was eye-opening. He reported on LSD having been used to eliminate allergies, alter pigmentation, reduce inflammatory response, and trigger focused genetic change. These experiences, and other anecdotes, leave Weil thinking that we've not yet hit first gear in psychedelic research.

Dave Nichols conducted an informal poll, to see how many audience members found the latter portions of their LSD experiences to be marred by paranoia or anxiety. Having written extensively about my own travails, I was relieved to see 15–20% of the audience raise their hands. This concurred with Nichols' estimations, and his research into a liver enzyme released some time between the fourth and sixth hours of LSD digestion, which apparently causes limbic disturbance. Discussing this with a fellow attendee, it was suggested that grapefruit juice might prevent assimilation of that enzyme, which could mean a whole new perspective on LSD for perhaps 20% of its would-be consumers.

I bullied my way to the front for James Kent's eye-opening lecture "The

Mechanics of Hallucinations", which (although marred by cross-platform PowerPoint difficulties) elucidated the relationship between neural network switching related to rod and cone vision, visual information processing rate, and the brain's pattern-recognition function. Apparently, when overloaded with visual information, the brain switches control of the visual input to the brain areas responsible for creating dream imagery, which can overlay directly on top of open-eye information. All this, plus the witty bravado that makes Kent who he is!

The Erowids should be mentioned for their meticulous sociological research into use patterns surrounding newly evolving substances that are based on cannabinoid analogs. Their two-headed approach allowed them to interchangeably deliver the play-by-play facts and color commentary, which in this case described the history of Spice, its user-reported effects, market size estimates, legal backlash, and the subsequent whack-a-mole explosion of imitations, all while questioning the thinking of those who've turned imitation cannabis of unknown quality or composition into a multimillion dollar industry. ●

A Harmonious Success

by NICK SAND

The Shulgin tribute dinner was a heartwarming and very satisfying event. It stands out as the most memorable moment of the conference. Stan Grof's

workshop was A+. The whole gathering had a nice friendly feeling, competition wars for grant money seemed to be at an all-time low, and there was a hint of unity and harmony not seen since the sixties throughout the entire spectrum of hippies, freaks, and medical/psychiatric experts in the field. ●

Time with Friends

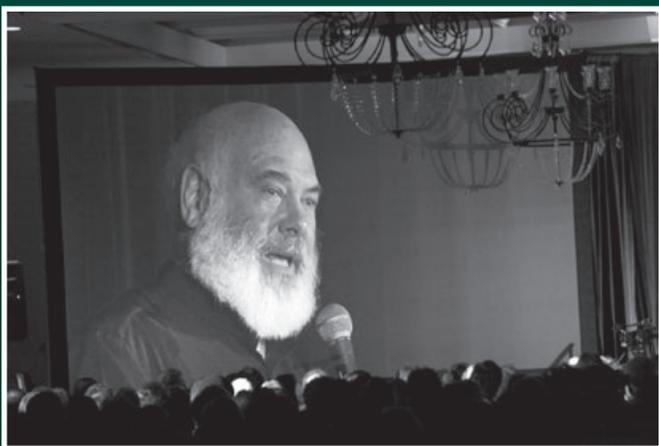
by LORENZO HAGERTY

For me, the event was about the people who gathered there. While we all know that there is a worldwide interest in psychedelics, it was very reassuring to actually be *among* such a large number of like-minded people. Looking back at the weekend, I realize that I now know dozens of new people who I think of as friends. My favorite moment was to be together in person—for the first time since 1999—with four of the five founding members of the Psychedelic Salon, which originally was an online voice chat group. My sincere thanks to the entire MAPS staff who put this event together; and in particular, my love and gratitude to the Erowid crew. ●

Gathering of the Tribe

by THOMAS SEEGER

Any gathering of the Tribe is a good thing. This one was a real advance, in that it presented the use (as opposed to abuse) of the sacraments in a positive light. But I don't have to tell *you* that. I



Andrew Weil speaks



Exhibitors in entrance hall

was skeptical at first, but the MAPS crew pulled it off in a way that successfully surfed the interface between an epochal event and a media circus. Kudos to them.

The best presentation by far was that of Julie Holland, talking about her ER adventures, and how she has been able to advance the art of psychedelic therapy within the NY medical system. At the same time, I was appalled at the fact that she was not given nearly enough time to present her stuff and would have given a much better talk if she didn't have to motormouth it in a desperate manner.

Moments! Where do I start? Giving Sasha the love that he deserves, even if he might be past the point of assimilating it all properly. Getting in touch with many old friends and making countless new ones. Discovering people who are following the same path, or even just fellow travelers. And it was all a great party, even for a person such as myself who doesn't know how to have a good time. Being a bartender at the Erowid hospitality suite was, for me, the fulfillment of a dream. ●

Past, Present, and Future...

by ANONYMOUS

A glowing, inspiring, thought-provoking coming together of the community—truly, a watershed event. While distracted by the sheer amount of interacting I did with other attendees, I managed to fit in a few sessions. I particularly liked the ayahuasca talk

wherein a gentleman explained how the brain works on psychedelics: in a slowed down state. Some talks were fairly dry and generally put folks to sleep, as is often the case in presentations of scientific papers where the speaker doesn't know how to engage an audience.

A key moment for me was during the Shulgin tribute banquet, when it became clear that a strong, diverse, yet singular community was present in the room. Our past, present, and future all seemed to radiate out from that moment in the ballroom at the funky Holiday Inn in North San Jose. I sensed that the community had attained a sort of viability, where we would be able to rally if called, to defend any member who came under attack. Something was beginning anew. I was wearing a scarf that Timothy Leary had worn in the years before his death, to bring the spirit and original intent of those perhaps somewhat misguided and unfortunate early pioneers back to the space where it is being reborn. ●

Psychedelic Used Car Salesmen

by NER

When looking at the top MAPS people I felt as if I were looking at used car dealers: a necessary evil? Funding and all, I saw a lot of hungry eyes; needing work, I guess?

Listening to Carolyn Garcia speak of meeting Neal Cassady, seeing Nick Sand, and hearing Earth and Fire mention

Terence McKenna and experiencing the subtle irony of their talk—that's what I came for, and I was fulfilled. Also, the ayahuasca track had something special; it seems that "medicine" can produce a kind of humbling experience, which was reflected in what I heard there.

All in all, the potential harvesting of the hungry masses that flooded the event was unpleasant. Thank God for Mountain Girl, Nick, Earth and Fire. I really miss Terence and others. Also, bless the Shulgins. I'm not completely comfortable with MAPS and the potential profit motive, along with the star-trip/desperate-\$-ego-trip. Oh well. It may be the way of the world at this time, and it's just what I felt. ●

The Invisible Conference

by LEO FIGGS

I thought the coolest and most hopeful lecture was the "silent lecture" delivered repeatedly during the conference in the main hall. I am referring to the short intermittent blacking-out of PowerPoint slideshows, despite the expertise of the audio-visual techs. As it persisted, I detected a hint of an accent to the silent Morse code, and after a wee bit recognized the mischievous rhythm being offered to all of us by the Irish Lads of Psychedelic Science: Timothy Leary and Terence McKenna. I think that they were showing us that they couldn't be kept away from such a paradigm-shifting conference. ●



Alex Grey describes his painting to Dr. Shulgin



Rick Doblin

I Think I'll Have More

4-Methylmethcathinone (Mephedrone) Experience Report Excerpts

My Bubbly Love Affair

by MeMeC

[...] As soon as it came in the mail I ripped open the package. Inside was 2 grams of a fluffy white powder that most closely resembled powdered snow or powdered sugar. The smell was not as bad as I thought it would be from reading reports. [...] I measured out a low dose of 50 mg and lined it up. I found it very hard to make lines as the substance tended to stick together, but eventually I got a decent line and up the nose it went.

It burns a lot. Especially that first time, it felt like it went right under my eye and caused tears to stream out. Within minutes I was feeling better, light seemed brighter, energy levels doubled, and I got the urge to move around and talk.

Satisfied with the feeling, and having the peak effects wear down a little after about 20 minutes, I weighed out another 150 mg. I separated it into two lines, snorting one up each nostril. This shit hits hard. I was flying high, feeling better than after a large line of good coke or 3–4 pills of ecstasy. I was moving around the room blasting electronic music and talking a mile a minute. The feeling is similar to MDMA, where my body seems fluid and I

So, having told myself I'd go very easy and just try it out, within 36 hours I'd done the whole gram.

feel like I'm floating when walking. I was feeling great and I was in love.

[...] I must also address my least favorite part about it, which is the comedown. The initial effects hit the hardest but with that rush is a retraction of the peak effect at a fairly quick rate. The best feelings leave so quickly that, even though I still have the residual

stimulation, I get a sense of emptiness and am not content with doing anything. Depressing thoughts also accompany the comedown and nearly every time I pretty much convince myself that I will never do any drug again. [...]

So after six months of heavy mephedrone use, I am done. Although I love it more than any other drug, it is too good, and I am worried about the negative effects that it could have in the future. I noticed some negative effects in the peak of my use relating mostly to short-term memory loss, scrambling of words when speaking, and word recall. After one month of no use, I am starting to notice an increase (or recovery) in my short-term memory and I don't scramble my words as much. Word recall is increasing, though not as quickly. I am glad I am done but will miss it. [...] ●

Positive State of Mind

by Norman

0:00—Ingest 100 mg in a small glass of water. Tasted foul, but you have to get past the bees to get the honey.

0:15—Feeling slightly anxious with a sense of anticipation. A notable difference but still very light.

0:30—A nice mild rushing feeling. Music is starting to sound more enjoyable.

0:45—Body feeling slightly numb with slightly

more energy. Mood is becoming more positive and relaxed.

0:55—Feeling very nice. A place similar to where I get on MDMA: slightly rushy but still pretty mild and much more in control.

1:00—Reach a plateau. Still feeling nice, warm, and open. Feel the need to talk to someone.

1:30—Just had a conversation that was very open and relaxed. Still on that plateau.

1:45—Much the same. Alert and feeling good.

2:00—A big rush of euphoria followed by a diminishing of the good feeling. Having read other reports, I'm guessing that's it for tonight.

2:45—I'm still pretty up. Still full of energy, if a little less settled. My jaw is going a bit; not so much grinding as that I'm becoming more aware of my teeth coming together.

3:00—Feel pretty relaxed. Most of the effects have subsided. I have more mephedrone left and I'm tempted to take some more. But I'll not.

Overall I enjoyed the experience. I like the vibrant "up" feeling with nice body sensations. I also enjoyed talking, as it seemed to flow easily and naturally. ●

Pleasant

by Komodo

[...] I tried the drug under peer pressure: two of my friends insisted I try it, and I finally gave in. I was freaking terrified while snorting up my dose. The horrible burn and taste of the substance did not make me any more comfortable. While waiting for the drug to display its full effects, I felt quite nauseous, but I must admit this was probably more out of stress than out of the drug's actual effects.

The come-up was incredibly fast: ten minutes and wham!, there I was, euphorically dancing. I also felt quite connected to the people around me. We danced for about an hour, then proceeded with another dose. We didn't wait for the come-up on the dance floor, but instead went outside. We chatted as the effects hit, and I deeply appreciated the fact that MCAT lets me talk and act quite normally

(pupils can become quite large, it can cause restlessness, and one of us also had some teeth grinding). In low doses I got a nice high, and stayed 90% rational.

We returned to the dance floor, and danced for the rest of the night. I did two more doses during this time. The high would last for about an hour, and I'd take it back up with another dose. I must say this drug is very psychologically addictive. The feeling is quite nice, and overdoing it could be easy.

We left the place at 6:00 am, and here I am now. I have had no negative comedown at all (just a vague feeling of nostalgia), and I think I'm making perfect sense. [...]

MCAT gave me the impression that it was very unhealthy—radical nose burning and horrible taste even for a synthetic drug! I won't be doing it again for quite a while, but I must say it restored my flagging faith in chemical drugs. [...] Bottom line: worth trying in small doses, not made for regular use. ●

Very Nice, Very More-ish

by Grandad K

Postman rang my bell at 8:15 am on a Saturday morning, so I got up and took delivery. I made a cup of tea and did a smallish line—perhaps 50 mg. A minute or two later, I came up with a strong rush, so much so that I seriously thought of lying on the floor in case I fell out of the chair! I settled for my big comfortable sofa; I sat there for over half an hour, waiting for the powerful but pleasurable buzz to subside enough that I could go into the kitchen to make another cup of tea.

I did a second line and that wasn't as immediate as the first but it did result in a warm, empathetic feeling coming over me. I guess this is what E users call being "loved up"; I would happily have hugged a complete stranger!

I'd told myself that I would pace myself; just do one or maybe two small lines to get a feel for it. By about 5:00 pm, I'd done 10–12 lines, about 500 mg in all.

[...] I stayed up until about 2:00 am, doing more until I went to bed, telling myself I'd leave the rest of the bag for a couple of weeks before trying any more.

Got up today, had a line, got a rush, had another line—you get the idea. So, having told myself I'd go very easy and just try it out, within 36 hours I'd done the whole gram. [...] ●

Nasty on the Nose

by RA

0:00—Slice and prepare a line. Not sure of the weight, but I estimate 200 mg. I snort this using a straw. Big mistake, the pain and suffering in the nose are not worth it!

0:10—Feel a little high, but a bit disappointed. Seems to be very slow coming on. Pain in the nose is mostly gone, but I vow never to do that again.

0:30—High is interesting. Feel very buzzed, bustling around the house doing chores at about twice the speed of normal. My mind feels alert and active. Eyes feel a bit funny. A little difficult focusing and they appear to be flicking back and forth when trying. Legs are quite jittery, feeling of being a bit cold.

1:00—High is waning. The alertness and attention to detail feel good, but the eye thing is annoying! Nose is now ok, but still have no intention to ever snort it again.

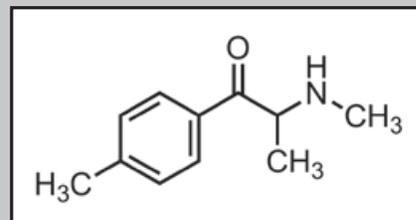
1:30—A quick look on the Internet for other methods of administration, and I decide to try a bomb of 200 mg (estimated) wrapped in paper. Quite a chemical taste.

2:15—Feeling a bit cheated as I'm still feeling the after-effects of the first hit and nothing from the second. Decide I've had enough indoors so I take the dog for a walk around some fields and woods.

2:30—Walking through the woods the second hit suddenly takes hold, literally as a rush all over my body. Same feeling of incredible alertness. My mind

4-Methylmethcathinone

Quick Facts



Common Names: Mephedrone, 4-MMC, Meow-Meow, M-Cat

Effects Classification: Stimulant; Euphoriant

Chemical: 2-Methylamino-1-p-tolylpropan-1-one

Dosage (Oral): Threshold 25 mg; Common 75–200 mg

Dosage (Insufflated): Threshold 10 mg; Common 50–100 mg

Duration (Oral): 2–5 hours

Duration (Insufflated): 1–3 hours

Legal Status: Controlled in many countries as of 2010; likely qualifies as an analog drug under U.S. law if intended for human consumption.

Users of 4-methylmethcathinone frequently re-dose, (sometimes compulsively) especially when insufflating the material. It is generally described in terms relating its effects to amphetamine and MDMA. A handful of deaths have been associated with its use and some self-reports include worrisome descriptions of dangerous levels of vasoconstriction. As with other stimulants, cardiovascular risks are the primary health concern associated with this substance.

is active and aware of everything.

2:45—The trees appear so heightened. I can see all the birds and squirrels, every little movement. No problem walking, but I seem to be going slower than normal. Receive a phone call and can talk perfectly normally, despite feeling wave after wave of rushes. If anything, I am feeling quite talkative. It just started snowing; make it home safely with the dog.

3:15—Second hit now waning. Feeling much as before, no longer getting waves but mind still active and alert. Muscles feel tired from being so active. I've been very thirsty throughout the whole experience but have been drinking frequently.

4:00—Pretty much all effects have passed and I'm heading back to normal. No big comedown, which was nice. Can remember the entire experience, and found it positive. ●

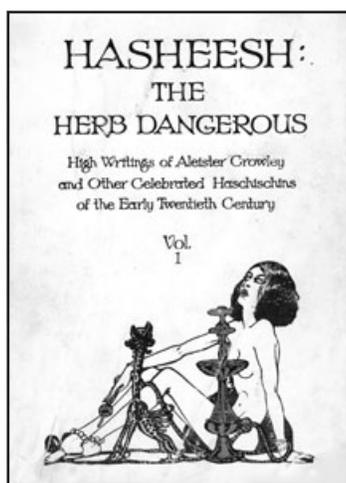
MYSTICAL INSIGHT & DRUGS

Book Recommendations for Reflecting on Gnosis

by Erik Davis

Gnosis means mystic knowledge, not book-learning but revelation, visionary insight. We know the call and the taste of gnosis most directly from ancient Western traditions like Gnostic Christianity, Jewish apocalypticism, and Neoplatonic theurgy. All the same, the term is often used more generally to characterize mystical experience as such—both visionary journeys through other realms and, especially, first-hand intuitional encounter with the nature of reality: the whole enchilada in your mouth right now.

Given its emphasis on the direct experience of deeply transformative insights, the tradition of writing and reflecting on gnosis has influenced the discussion of psychoactive substances, to say nothing of the trips themselves. The following three texts are all wonderful explorations of the fertile tradition that Dale Pendell calls “pharmako-gnosis”.



The Herb Dangerous: The Psychology of Hashish

by Oliver Haddo (Aleister Crowley) in *Hasheesh: The Herb Dangerous*, edited by David Hoyer (Level, 1974)

This fascinating and illuminating essay was one of four articles devoted to “The Herb Dangerous” that ran in the first volume of *The Equinox*, a review devoted to “Scientific Illuminism” that was edited by the notorious Aleister Crowley early in the 20th century. Crowley is a much-maligned, deeply misunderstood figure whose prophetic brilliance is often obscured beneath the less savory dimensions of his personality and biography, of which there are many.

His odd brilliance is very much on display here. At this point in his life, Crowley was still a materialist in the best sense of the term, a visionary skeptic who plunged into intense meditative and magical operations even as he strove to keep his feet on the ground with humor and wit. He was an original psychonaut, speculating with the evidence provided by his own experiences, offering wise advice on titration and habituation, and never forgetting the nervous system that underlies the show.

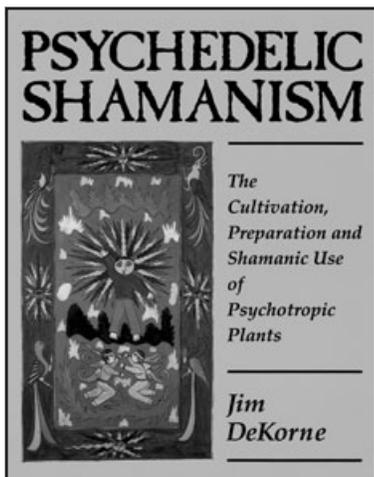
Arguing that hashish helps “roll away the stone” from the deeper dimensions of both ceremonial magic and Buddhist meditation, Crowley identifies three main effects of the drug: the narcotic effect, the “hallucinative effect”, and the “volatile aromatic effect”, which he associates with the revelation of reality as nested hieroglyphs of some deeper mind. Crowley is not interested in visual or auditory hallucinations so much as this cognitive spark, which leads to one of his most thorough and exacting discussions of higher states of consciousness, including experiences of high gnosis he describes with the Sanskrit

terms *Atmadarshana* and *Shivadarshana*. In fact, “The Herb Dangerous” spends a lot more time with Crowley’s eccentric if provocative discussion of Buddhist *Skandhas* than it does with paeans to the weed.

Though Crowley is not explicit about the matter, the essay arises from his attempt to understand a remarkable experience of his a few years earlier. On October 9, 1906, he believed he had finally achieved one of the ultimate operations of magical attainment: the Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel. Though he neglects to mention the fact in his official accounts, it turns out that Crowley had stimulated the breakthrough by swallowing a few

At this point in his life, Crowley was still a materialist in the best sense of the term, a visionary skeptic who plunged into intense meditative and magical operations even as he strove to keep his feet on the ground with humor and wit.

grams of hash. Confronted with this fact, one can only quote *The Book of the Law*, the marvel from the gods Crowley had channeled in 1904: “To worship me take wine and strange drugs whereof I will tell my prophet, & be drunk thereof!”



Psychedelic Shamanism

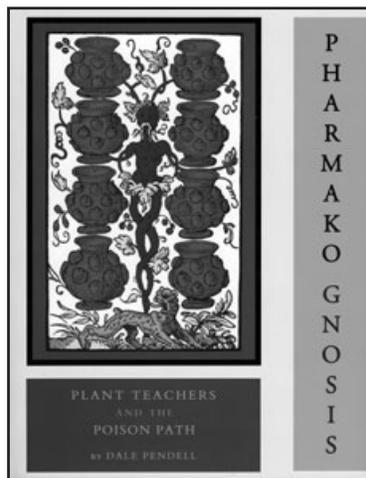
by Jim DeKorne (Loompanics, 1994)

Despite some issues with the nitty-gritty details, DeKorne's book belongs alongside Terence McKenna's *True Hallucinations* and D.M. Turner's *The Essential Psychedelic Guide* as one of the best books to emerge from the psychedelic florescence of the early 1990s. The back cover copy accurately declares DeKorne a "psychonaut", a first-person experimentalist equally engaged with descriptive mysticism and ethnobotanical lore, inner exploration and outer technique. These somewhat different goals are reflected in the structure of the book, which, after a few introductory chapters, presents hands-on information about growing, extracting, and consuming plant hallucinogens like San Pedro cactus, morning glories, and Syrian rue.

DeKorne is no chemist, and the book is unfortunately peppered with errors about extraction methods and the molecular mojo of psychotropics like *Salvia divinorum* and *Phalaris* grass. The lasting value of *Psychedelic Shamanism* lies instead in the author's self-presentation as a clear-eyed and deeply thinking psychonaut. The opening chapter shares a number of otherworldly personal stories—not all psychedelically inspired—whose veracity is only intensified by DeKorne's no-bullshit dissection of his own experience and motivations. (At one point he admits he was "probably clinically insane.") From these experiences, as well as his deep reading of anthropology, DeKorne

tentatively embraces something like a shamanic view of reality, in which multiple dimensions and discarnate entities weave with our human realm into "One World". But from this potentially fuzzy premise, he proceeds with some startlingly refreshing thinking, especially concerning the vexing nature of the entities encountered by so many voyagers.

No romantic hippie, DeKorne acknowledges from the get-go that not all of these characters are reliable or friendly. From ancient Gnosticism he draws the concept of the archons—lower rulers who often present themselves as gods—to offer a critical view of entities as tricksters sustained by our own beliefs and adulation. "What may be a belief in the Christian Trinity or Islamic Jihad to humans, may be the equivalent of a T-bone steak to entities of the imaginal realm who depend upon that belief for their existence." What makes DeKorne's attitude particularly gnostic is not only his cool embrace of the direct non-dogmatic experience of Mystery, but his lightly held suspicions about channeled teachers, dream beasts, and other bardo know-it-alls. The freedom that gnosis provides, he reminds us, is also freedom from the gods.



Pharmako/Gnosis

by Dale Pendell (Mercury House, 2005)

By the time the poet, plant alchemist, and sometimes computer programmer Dale Pendell published his mammoth three-volume *Pharmako* trilogy this last decade, the world had seen at least a

century of texts attempting to squeeze spiritual insight and religious correlates out of psychoactive experience. Pendell, however, managed to write a work of erudition and imagination that was not only strikingly original, but also wise. Whipper-snappers would do well to study the content of these great books, along with their form—a patchwork of citations and lore and lyric flights that express the multidimensional quality of psychoactives themselves.

Pendell's great strength lies in taking drugs and their discourse not literally, but poetically. The magic of the *pharmakon* that gives the work its title—the Greek notion of poison that is also medicine—is the power of metaphor itself, of the make-believe that takes us from here to there. In Pendell's hands, even science—the language of taxonomy, chemistry, and extraction methods so necessary for an authentic engagement with this material—becomes a poem of clarity and practice that grounds his more ambiguous and sometimes disturbing encounters with "the ally".

Pendell is no snob, and his "poison path" leads him to all manner of toxins, including amphetamine, heroin, and tobacco. That said, it is no accident that he reserved most of the heavy stuff for this, his third and final volume, which is devoted to materials that fall into the categories he calls Phantastica and Daimonica. Yet even as he takes (and takes on) awesome and sometimes frighteningly otherworldly chemicals like LSD, DMT, and ketamine, Pendell displaces the traditional hyperspace cowboy emphasis on "peak experience". Instead, Pendell's poison path is more holistic—less about storming the gates of heaven than traipsing around the woods and marshes where the demons and animals and lazy poets hang out. Perhaps his Zen practice inoculated him against the messianic inflation and quantum-physics literalism that mar so many psychedelic pundits. In the end, the gnosis he depicts does not lie in the flash but in all the various qualities of light and shade that surround psychoactive experiences—not just the glorious sun at midnight, but glittering onset, and the hazy dusk at the end of a long afternoon. ●

Connecting the Microdots

THE STATE OF THE STONE 2010

by Fire & Earth Erowid

The following is based on a presentation Earth and Fire gave at the Psychedelic Science in the 21st Century conference in April 2010.

Terence McKenna was an inspired teller of tales and a psychedelic thinker of big thoughts. Even after his death, his stories remain some of the most compelling renditions of what spiritually informed psychedelic seekers may encounter in their travels.

.....
Defining the state of the now is about acknowledging history, experiencing the present, and envisioning what paths we are taking into the future.
.....

McKenna presented several talks in his career titled “State of the Stone”, in which he described current psychedelic culture and the mindset of psychedelic enthusiasts. He occasionally expressed a mistrust of science, of a purely scientific viewpoint, or of the overly self-certain philosophy of science. He commented that human experiences, especially those precipitated by psychedelic drugs, are often measured and dismissed by the scientific industry. In 1995, he said:

For all of its capacity to razzle-dazzle, Science has some serious drawbacks, some serious limitations that psychedelic experiences make more starkly evident. [...] Science works very differently from ordinary perception. [...] If we have a thousand people who go out on a starry night and

see only the ordinary constellations, that is buried. But if one person goes out on a starry night and sees a rectangular black object a city block long with softly glowing yellow lights moving along the horizon, that’s big news.

Science works exactly the opposite. If you want, for example, to carry out a scientific observation, and you measure let’s say the electrical charge running through

a wire, and you measure it a thousand times, and 999 times it’s between 3 and 4 volts, but one time you get a measurement of 1,290 volts, a good scientist discards the aberrant measurement. He says, ‘Well that can’t be right, that’s ridiculous. Get that puppy out of there. Now average the other 999.’ A completely different way of doing intellectual business than the way it is done at the edge of human thought, where we *seek* the curious, the anomalous, the unusual...

We have all experienced the annoyance of reading overly trumpeted findings from scientific publications, knowing that there is a huge likelihood that at least one crucial component of the finding will be later refuted or changed. We must be careful of overweighting any single finding. But we also need to avoid dismissing the unique things that happen in the world.

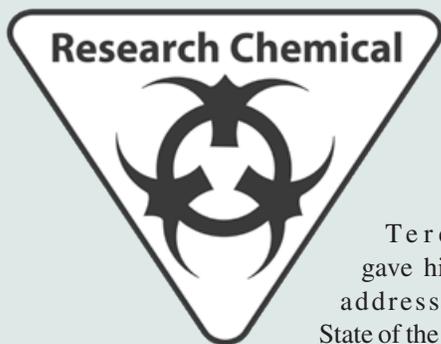
As we pass the ten-year anniversary of his death, and with thanks to Terence for reminding us that the universe is far bigger and the human experience far weirder than much scientific inquiry lets on, we’re following his lead with a variant on his State of the Stone address.

Connecting History to Future

Defining the state of the *now* is about acknowledging history, experiencing the present, and envisioning what paths we are taking into the future. What are the connecting points between the past, the *now*, and the future? What are the unique aspects? How is *now* different? What is the importance of this particular *now*?

Now is the history of the future. The actions of recreational psychoactive users today—the conferences they attend, the articles they write, the topics they blog about, the organizations they support, the research they participate in, the products they buy, the psychedelics they use—will be retained in the consciousness of our culture as it looks back on this *now*.





Research Chemical

Since Terence gave his last address, the State of the Stone has morphed to include a resurgence of psychedelic research, court successes of ayahuasca-drinking churches in the United States, the expansion of medical cannabis into the public consciousness, the continued evolution of online communication modalities, the reduced availability of LSD, and an increase in availability of recreationally used pharmaceuticals and new psychoactive “research chemicals”.

1990s–2004

From our vantage point on the visionary sphere, the State of the Stone is tightly tied to what psychoactive substances are currently in use and shaping the psychonautical mind spaces. Just as the drugs available 10 or 100 years ago affect what is thought about psychoactives, how they are discussed, and what is researched in universities, laboratories, and dorm rooms, so too will the psychoactive substances available today affect study and research in the future.

To understand the *now* of available psychoactives, we look back to the late 1990s through the mid-2000s, to the first big wave of recreational drugs available online.

During this period, there was an expanding and evolving market both for ethnobotanicals and pure, synthesized chemicals. Erowid and others began calling these relatively unknown chemicals “research chemicals” to highlight the risk of ingesting drugs that were not well tested for toxicity in the general population.

This period was characterized by small, independent, commercial labs synthesizing and selling Shulgin creations initially publicized in *PIHKAL* and *TIHKAL*. Certificates of purity sometimes accompanied the products, along with a fig leaf of pretense that the vendors were selling only for legitimate laboratory research and not for human consumption.

Operation Web Tryp

In 2004, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration cracked down on a handful of the most prominent vendors in the United States, prosecuting two on the basis that their customers had died as a result of ingesting their products. Some customers were persuaded to provide evidence against the vendors. Though several vendors spent time in jail and lost assets, and a few were sentenced to heavy terms, most served no prison time.

One of the more interesting elements of the businesses selling research chemicals during this period is that there was little to no hint of connection to larger criminal organizations involved with cocaine, methamphetamine, or heroin distribution.

Most of the products sold were non-addictive psychedelic substances that were of interest primarily to psychonauts and curious newbies.

The primary exceptions were the GHB family of drugs (GHB, 1,4-B, and GBL), which were just becoming associated with addictive, compulsive behavior (similar to alcohol in many ways).

Hibernation

Following Operation Web Tryp, the online deliver-to-your-door recreational drug market went into hibernation for a couple of years. Looking back, it is obvious that the DEA’s operation acted as an evolutionary pressure, pushing the entrepreneurs and vendors in new directions.

One often is left to wonder if senior drug control authorities are aware of just how much their choices dictate which drugs 18–22-year-olds are exposed to. Some in the enforcement apparatus must know that when they block access to one drug, demand is then redirected fractally and organically.



The NOW

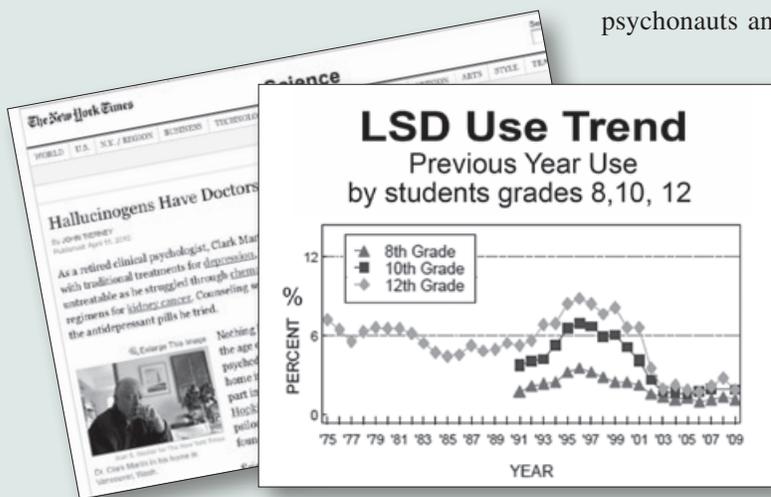
Over the last few years, there has been a new wave of synthetic psychoactive drugs produced and sold, including cannabinoids, psychedelics, and stimulants (especially cathinone variants of previously existing drugs).

Spice

The developments around packaged smokable products marketed as cannabis replacements are particularly interesting. As described in “Spice and Spin-Offs” (*Erowid Extracts* #16, June 2009), these products marked a new stage in the evolution of recreational psychoactives. First available in late 2006, “Spice” was notable for its packaging’s slick, professional appearance. Three-gram packets have sold online, as well as in European head shops, for \$20–50 (USD), a price similar to good quality street cannabis.

The package purports to contain “incense” and includes 13 herbs and spices in its ingredients list. It fails to mention the synthetic cannabinoid(s) deposited on the herbal base.

There have been herbal cannabis replacements available for nearly 40 years and approximately none have



induced effects that could be confused with those of cannabis. But quickly after Spice hit the market it began to stand out from previous products because many people described that it had effects very similar to cannabis. From the reports, Spice seemed like it contained cannabis, a cannabis extract, or a synthetic cannabinoid. Taking a method cue from Arthur Heffter, we tried smoking the material ourselves and were quickly convinced that the effects were the result of a cannabinoid, and not simply a synergy of the listed ingredients.



In 2007 we had a sample analyzed via GC/MS, asking the lab to look for THC and other cannabinoids. They were unable to determine the identity of the psychoactive chemicals in the mix, ruling out cannabis or any simple cannabis extract.

Spurred on by media attention, in December 2008 a cannabinoid-specializing lab in Germany finally identified a chemical in Spice called JWH-018, an obscure synthetic cannabinoid receptor agonist.

Soon after, U.S. Customs reported that Spice packages that *they* had seized contained HU-210, another research cannabinoid. Then, in the January 2009 issue of the *Journal of Mass Spectrometry*, a second German cannabinoid lab identified a close homolog of CP-47,497, yet another cannabinoid receptor agonist not previously seen on the recreational market. Since then, three additional cannabinoid-like compounds have been identified in samples of Spice: JWH-073, JWH-250, and JWH-398.¹

During 2008 and 2009, dozens of knock-off brands also became available. In 2009, the United Kingdom, Germany, and several other European countries moved to ban one or more of the chemicals found in Spice.

K2

Since the beginning of the Spice phenomenon, its distributors chose not to sell it through U.S. vendors, explicitly stating this restriction on the packaging.

This limited the product's availability in the United States to those able to find a reseller willing to ignore the restrictions. As a result, the synthetic cannabinoids hadn't made much of an impact in the U.S. until mid-2009, when a new product called

"K2" became widely available.

K2 is marketed as an "exotic herbal incense containing a combination of rare plants, herbal extracts, and botanical concentrates", sold in dark grey plastic baggies containing 3 grams of plant matter for \$20–30 (USD) each. It contains both JWH-018 and JWH-073.²

Whereas the research chemicals of the early 2000s (2C-T-7, 5-MeO-DIPT, etc.) were packaged as pure chemical powders, Spice, K2, and other variations are innocuously packaged as natural herbal blends, in the long tradition of feckless cannabis substitutes. So instead of being sold primarily through chemical vendors, they have ended up in brick-and-mortar headshops and ethnobotanical stores in the U.S., sold by vendors who never would have sold pure 2C-T-7 or the majority of the previous generation of research chemicals.

K2 Crackdown

As K2 gained popularity in Kansas, the Kansas legislature moved quickly to consider prohibiting K2 and other Spice-type products.

On February 4, 2010, several weeks before a new law was passed, two vendors in Kansas (Bouncing Bear Botanicals and Sacred Journey) were the target of a joint FDA, Kansas Bureau of Investigation, and local Lawrence, Kansas law enforcement raid. Both of the vendors had been actively involved in lobbying against the new law.

A couple of weeks before the raid, one of the vendors contacted Erowid to ask for help finding experts who might bolster their arguments against banning K2. They later expressed that they felt they were being targeted because of their political activism. Initial charges were dropped, but the prosecutor has suggested that new charges may be brought in the future, and seized property has not been returned.

Several additional states are moving forward with banning the synthetic cannabinoids that previous laws left uncovered.

Spice Product Sales

One notable difference between the phenethylamine and tryptamine research chemical wave ten years ago and the wave of cannabinoids available *now* is that the size of the cannabinoid market is substantially greater. We

had unconfirmable reports that in late 2008 and early 2009, small short-lived European vendors of Spice and its spin-offs were doing thousands of euros in sales per day. One vendor in the U.S. reported that their sales went up by an order of magnitude, from \$1,000 a day to \$10,000 a day, after they began carrying K2.

Cannabis Safety

It is still unknown what risks are presented by these research cannabinoids. As cannabis replacements, Spice-type products are up against a mountain of historical and scientific evidence that establishes the safety of cannabis. Large epidemiological studies and experimental data have shown that cannabis smoking does not involve many acute risks other than those of general inebriation.

Even extended, heavy use does not appear to cause brain damage or substantially increased risk of lung cancer or heart disease in healthy users, and it causes only moderate increases in respiratory illnesses. However, it is unknown if the same is true of Spice, K2, or related products.

Cannabis is, however, well known for causing some people to experience paranoid ideation and feelings of anxiety. This triggering of psychotic symptoms is one of the top cannabis-related problems receiving research attention in the last decade. Some novel cannabinoids might not cause paranoia or might be less likely to trigger latent psychoses than cannabis. There is value in exploring THC-like compounds in case they do not produce these negative effects.

Communications (R)Evolution

The only reason that the *now* of drug availability—the research chemical phenomenon, the Spice phenomenon—can exist is because of the explosion of communication technologies. Unlike ten years ago, a large number of people carry devices with them at all times that can access up-to-the-minute data about anything, including psychoactives. Advances in psychoactive science and products; news reports about drug availability and legislative actions; archives and historical records of psychoactive culture from María Sabina



chants to Bill Hicks routines; and the latest theories of the psychedelic origins of religion, are all broken out into bite-sized chunks designed to ingest on the bus on the way to work.

Communication technologies are driving the *now* of psychoactive drugs. The State of the Stone is only what it is because of these digital technologies. Anyone can participate in a specific drug culture, psychedelic subculture, medical monitoring system, or even drug research project. Each can find their own favorite flavor that coincides with their interests.

Novelty

One theme Terence returned to frequently was the power of novelty. The human brain usually treats the new as more interesting and important than the old.

Take “Ivory Wave” (recently renamed “Vanilla Sky”), with its shiny, corporate, mass-produced packaging. It is sold by the same vendors who sell other recreational psychoactives, although the manufacturer states it is “concentrated bath salts”. Groups of anonymous aspiring drug geeks discuss in detail in the hidden corners or very public squares of the Internet what effects they got when they snorted it and what they think its unidentified active chemicals could be.

Do you suppose it is (-)-2- β -carbomethoxy-3- β -(4-fluorophenyl)tropane (β -CFT, WIN-35,428)? Maybe. Maybe not. Perhaps it’s fancy packaging for

MDPV. Or maybe it’s 4-methylmethcathinone or bk-PMMA, or ephedrine. Or maybe it’s really just bath salts that nobody should be putting in their nose. Actually, it’s unclear whether it’s worse to snort MDPV or bath salts. We might know in a decade or two.

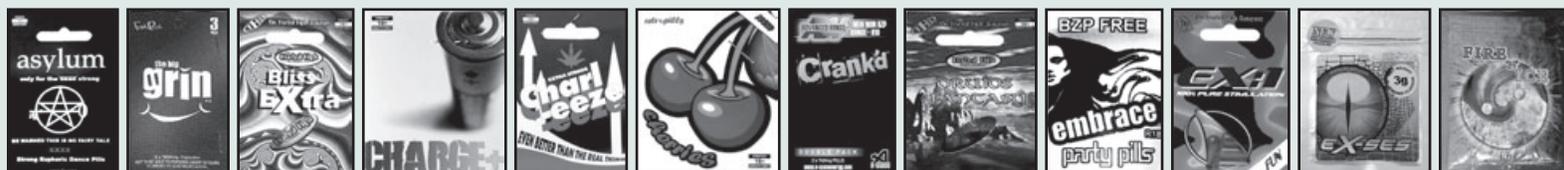
But Spice and Ivory Wave are not the only new products out there: what is in “NRG-1” or “Doves”? A brave explorer could be the first on their block, or in their city, or maybe in their country to try “London Underground Doves” which, based on one anonymous laboratory analysis, purportedly contains both bk-MBDB and mCPP.

People are interested in part because these products are theoretically legal and easily acquired online, but also because they are novel materials and experiences.

Deaths

Some of the new research chemical products have been associated with deaths in Europe, and there are a number of reports of lasting neurological problems and highly addictive effects. Those ingesting unknown, untested psychoactive products are volunteering as human guinea pigs: contributing to the state of knowledge, yes, but also risking their health.

A death from the careless use of a research chemical also raises its public profile, and provides fodder for the sensational news stories that will haunt that substance for the foreseeable future.



Mephedrone

Several deaths in the United Kingdom and Europe have been attributed to the use of the fairly new substance 4-methylmethcathinone (mephedrone). These have included cases where mephedrone was used alone as well as when combined with alcohol, methadone, or other chemicals. It can be difficult to directly determine cause in the case of psychoactive-related deaths, but some new substances do leap to attention in this regard more quickly than others. Mephedrone appears to cause enough stimulation and heart strain to be dangerous in some people or in combination with some other drugs.

In addition to dangers possibly inherent to certain substances, problems can arise from misidentification. Two

the chemical sold as 2C-B-fly. Energy Control's simple and effective thin-layer chromatography strongly indicated the material was bromo-dragonfly, a result that was later confirmed by both their lab and ours. This packaging error led to two deaths, as people took a dose ten times higher than they should have of a mislabeled and unregulated substance.

A Plethora

It's surprising how many grey-market recreational psychoactive products are available in the *now*. Only a handful of people know for sure what's in each, though there is often conflicting speculation. Eventually a definitive answer makes its way to the public, and a product either becomes known for being

bunk, unpopular for not being very good, or is actually identified as being active and fun... and then gets banned.

For many people, there is a thrill to ingesting a new substance as well as excitement to trying to solve the mystery of its nature. Tasting and comparing unknown substances and collaboratively working to identify them is a modern day version

the recreational markets, while others are just caffeine.

Along with being sold as party pills and illegal drug stand-ins, some are sold as potpourri, incense, bath salts, plant food or plant growth inhibitors, dewormers, and room deodorizers. There is a swirling blizzard of new products.

Diablo XXX

One particularly telling example is Diablo XXX, which doesn't identify ingredients but notes that it's "strong as hell" and warns not to "double drop". However, when the producer redesigned the packaging, they added that it is "Plant Feeder" and changed "Party Pills" to "Not for Human Consumption".

From the packaging, one can't even tell the chemical from the herbal, or products of a Chinese factory from those out of a Central American garden. There are all manner of psychoactive plants and herbs now sold in glossy single-serving packages. There are pre-rolled *Salvia divinorum* and kratom joints, blue lotus tinctures, seeds and pastes and extracts and leaves and roots, all ready for use.

Even the form of the material doesn't aid identification much. There are pills with herbal ingredients and herb mixtures with synthetic ingredients. Annoyingly, there seems to be an inverse relationship between how illegal a product's components are and how much it's marketed like an illegal drug. The pure, psychoactive compounds like 4-methylmethcathinone are sold as plant growth inhibitors, while low-activity herbs are sold to "GET YOU HIGH".

Marketing and Distribution

While the meta-issue of introducing novel drugs to the general public is not new and was also a hallmark of the 1960s, the current process is different in important ways. Today, it is not uncommon for new psychoactive drugs to be marketed after having been tried by only a few dozen people, and with little or no animal testing.



deaths last fall, one in California and another in Denmark, were the result of mislabeling by a vendor. The first indication was a post to an online forum that warned that the vendor selling a batch of 2C-B-fly had died after ingesting some himself. At that time it was not known whether a contaminant in the chemical was responsible, or if the drug had been misidentified.

Erowid worked with customers of the vendor, Team Shulgin, and the excellent Spanish risk reduction and drug testing organization Energy Control to analyze

of Amazonian residents tasting the bark of various trees in combination with the leaves of every plant to test their effects.

In the market *now*, it is difficult to tell good snake oil from bad snake oil, effective from ineffective, or dangerous from well-known. There are dozens of research chemicals currently available online or in head shops. They are sold as "legal highs", and often, whether implicitly or explicitly, positioned as replacements for a particular illegal drug like psilocybin mushrooms or cocaine. Some contain chemicals brand new to



Although LSD was a new drug when it escaped into the wild in the 1960s, it had already seen more than a decade of animal and human research.

Rational Choice?

The marketing of untested drugs to the general public is a service we shouldn't need. If cannabis were legal, Spice wouldn't exist. The repercussions of getting caught with a clearly illegal substance can be huge, including the possibility of losing federal financial aid for college. Once a person has made the decision to experiment with psychoactive drugs, a fairly rational evaluation of the risks and benefits will lead some to order Spice or Ivory Wave instead of buying cannabis or alcohol if underage.

One person posting to the popular Bluelight forums told the story of moving to the United Kingdom and choosing to buy grey-market drugs instead of ecstasy or cannabis. They acknowledged that the risks of the use of these research chemicals, these "plant foods", are unknown. But being caught with something that is clearly illegal could endanger their citizenship. Being caught with something of questionable legality likely would not.

Another person commented that finally they could know they were taking a "pure" substance, without acknowledging that the substance lacked essentially any human toxicity testing.

Where Science Meets Subculture

As we debated what defines this moment in time, this moment in the history of psychedelics, we contemplated the studies being sponsored and conducted by MAPS, Heffter, Beckley, CSP, and researchers around the world. Despite its philosophical, practical, and aesthetic warts, Science is definitively a major part of the State of the Stone in 2010.

Although the ethnobotanical and research chemical spectrum can seem to be a vulgar, profit-driven marketplace,

taking advantage of the inexperienced, it's also the cutting-edge of the science of psychoactive mind expansion. Many scientists working in this field are driven by their own experiences with visionary states.

Bill Richards, one of the key researchers in the Johns Hopkins psilocybin studies, was powerfully influenced in his career path by his own encounter with psilocybin in 1963, when he participated in psychological research in Germany. He first published about his experience pseudonymously in 1968, and then took full ownership in the peer-reviewed literature in 2004.^{3,4} As he described it:

I was led to a dimly lit basement room with a small bed and end table, given an injection of psilocybin, and left alone. To my incredible surprise, I [...] discovered myself awakening into an exquisitely beautiful, mystical form of consciousness outside of time.

[...] In the midst of this incredible epiphany, Dr. Baer entered with white coat and stethoscope, asked me to open my eyes and sit up on the edge of the bed, and was very seriously intent on checking my knee reflexes. As he hammered on my knees and scribbled down his findings, I sat on the edge of the bed with my arms outstretched, feeling infinite compassion for science in its infancy.

Next Generation of Researchers

Like Dr. Richards, the senior researchers in their 60s to 70s today were in their 20s during the explosion of psychedelics

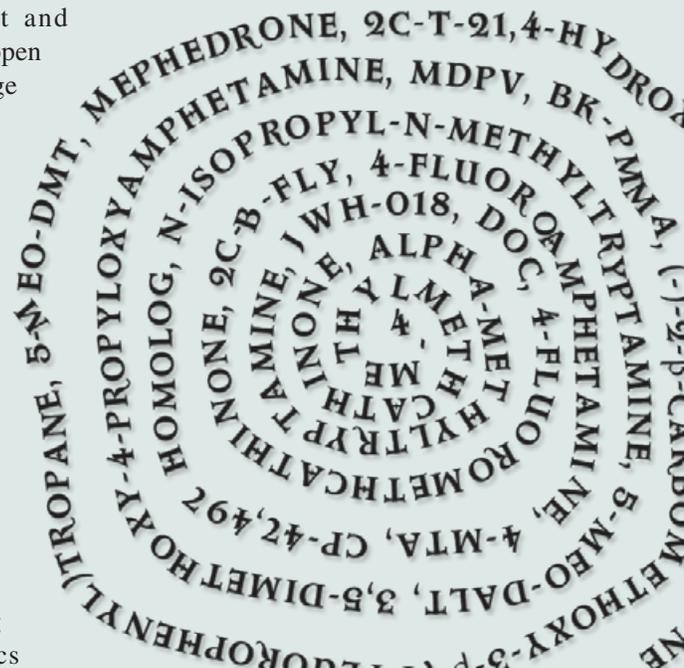
in the 1960s. People in this age group who approach us at conferences often express that they had great experiences with psychedelics in their youth, but after

.....
The marketing of untested drugs to the general public is a service we shouldn't need.

college they weren't able to stay connected with any sort of psychedelic community, so they lost interest.

The 2010s will be to the 2060s what the 1960s are to us today.

The young people going through college and cutting their teeth on widely available research chemicals today are in a different world. Every few months we hear from someone who has just received their PhD in pharmacology, chemistry, neurology, or psychology, wanting to let us know that they have been reading Erowid for years and were inspired in their career choice by their readings. In 40 years, they will be the senior researchers. They will have grown up not only with access to psychedelics, but with access to a dizzying array of



psychoactives; extensive information about their effects, chemistry, and culture; and communication systems allowing them to stay connected to others interested in the topic beyond the typical recreational drug-using period of youth. It will be fascinating to see what happens with generations for whom the communications boundaries have all but dissolved. This will certainly have a significant impact on future research.

Further, in the *now* there are no hard lines between researchers and the subculture. Members of the psychedelic subculture have access to the same scientific understandings about psychedelics that researchers do, such as mechanisms of harms like MDMA neurotoxicity, or spiritual benefits of psilocybin documented by the Griffiths group at Johns Hopkins. The distinction between scientific researchers, pharmaceutical researchers, subculture researchers,

.....
The massive availability of psychoactives and the increasing number of options people have around available mind states bring up the question of what mind state you're looking for.

and that chemistry geek in the college dorm are more blurry than they have been since before the explosion of psychedelics into the culture, and the backlash against them, in the mid-1960s.

Science is Subculture

Science is subculture, in that some of the substances on the research chemical market come directly out of commercial pharmaceutical labs. Remember Spice's homolog of CP-47,497? It's named that because "CP" is the internal code used by Pfizer pharmaceutical for all the new chemicals they synthesize. The "CP" stands for Charles Pfizer, the company's founder. Joining the ranks of drugs like LSD and MDMA, the active chemical in a new grey-market product being used by thousands worldwide—a substance already banned in several countries—was

first invented by a mainstream pharmaceutical company.

Science is Knowledge

Science can be defined as the collection and evolution of knowledge, rather than as the formal professional enterprise of academic researchers. Arguably, the collective knowledge of the people attending a psychedelic conference in 2010—not the presenters, but the *attendees*—will historically be judged as the state of the science of psychedelics in 2010.

The proof of this view is that the groundbreaking Johns Hopkins psilocybin research was not new at all. The finding that psilocybin can "occasion mystical experience" is not even remotely new. It hasn't been new in centuries, if one extends one's frame of reference to include other cultures. But even within the context of well-known literature in the English language, it hasn't been

real news in 45 years. This fact does not detract from the research, of course, and it is something

the researchers know very well.

The function of formal, peer-reviewed science often lies not in discovering the new so much as confirming and quantifying what is already known. The work being performed in psychedelic research is groundbreakingly parameterizing, proceduralizing, and documenting known facts. There are many things that people reading this article could agree on about psychedelics that are not yet confirmed data points in the scientific literature, but which will be someday.

What is novel about the *now* is not any individual new discovery or product. Instead, it is the pattern of a constant stream of new materials, packaging, and grey-marketing methods, allowing the right consumers to know that something is an interesting drug for as long as possible before law enforcement catches up and

prohibits it. Of course, this very pattern constitutes danger as well, for it means that substances are often ingested without enough data to make an informed assessment of risk.

What's novel about the current State of the Stone is the combination of these new substances with the ability to communicate about them with an increasingly inclusive "anyone". In the 1960s, new drugs were also becoming available. But in the *now*, a producer-vendor can, in a one-year period, choose a new drug, conduct testing, mass produce it, package it, advertise it through the subculture, sell it, and ship it to your door anywhere in the world.

What Do We Want?

The massive availability of psychoactives and the increasing number of options people have around available mind states bring up the question of what mind state you're looking for. Where will the evolution of psychedelic knowledge go from here?

We'll leave you with the thought that those of you reading this text will have a powerful impact on how those in the future think about psychedelics and recreational psychoactives. Whatever your opinion of Terence and his stoned rants, the State of the Stone has changed substantially in the decade since his death. This *now* is a pivotal moment in the understanding of the complex relationship between humans and psychoactive drugs. ●

References

1. *Understanding the 'Spice' Phenomenon*. EMCDDA. 2009. ISSN 1725-5767.
2. "Minutes of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee: Jan 13, 2010." Kansas Legislature. Feb 1, 2010. Accessed May 17, 2010 at: http://kslegislature.org/committeeminutes/09-10/senate/spubhealth/s_pubhealth.shtml.
3. Richards WA. (Robertson J, pseud.) "Report on Experiment Five." Metzner R (Ed.). *The Ecstatic Adventure*. Macmillan. 84–91.
4. Richards WA. "Navigation within Consciousness: Insights from Four Decades of Psychotherapy Research



Psychedelic Emergence Kit

BY THE TEAFÆRIE

I had a job as a hotel nanny in Hawaii for a while. It was awesome. I was Maui Poppins. My company worked all of the big resorts. Mostly it was an evening gig, where I had to hang out with tiny strangers in a hotel room for a few hours while mom and dad went to dinner and a show. Problem with hotel rooms is there's not much to do in there besides bounce on the bed and watch TV. Now I've got no objection to gymnastics practice, but I feel like a failure when my charges are compelled to resort to passive entertainment. So after a few weeks of making up games like "let's put dozens of strips of toilet paper up on the fan and then turn it on and see how many we can catch in the air", I started bringing a bag of tricks and toys along with me on my visitations. The contents got use-tested and refined over time, and eventually I got it down to a tight collection of classic hits.

Years later, I started serving as ground control so often that I was inspired to use the same magic carpet bag to hold a travel kit for trippers. I like to leave it packed in the closet so I can just grab it when a play date develops at the last minute or I get a late night phone call from an addled friend who wants me to come peel him off of the ceiling. Tastes and styles vary of course, but I figured I'd dump it out on the floor here and show you what I've got. Maybe it will inspire you to put together a psychedelic emergence (not to say emergency) kit of your own. In no particular order:

- A non-drip, non-tip candle.
- Lighters. (Pack two. Trust me.)
- A safety mirror. The kind they make for baby cribs is perfect. Yeah, yeah, I know; but sometimes it's interesting.
- Art supplies: Pen, paper, crayons, etc. (Nothing too messy.)
- Silly putty. I like the sparkly kind.
- Flowtoys (flowtoys.com). These are adjustable LED lightsticks that provide soft illumination. I find it fun and calming to spin stuff around. Glowsticks work almost as well, but they always end up in landfills.
- Sage and Palo Santo (an aromatic wood). Some people enjoy essential oils, too! I particularly like jasmine.
- Massage oil. I also have Tiger Balm. Your mileage may vary. Try it on your nipples. Don't get it in your eyes.
- Media player full of goodness. Load up your favorite device with music, beloved art, cool screensavers, and pix of loved ones. (Don't forget to charge it!)
- Recording devices. While there are risks associated with recording illegal activities, it's good to have a way to review the session.
- A shaker egg. Rhythm is powerful. Any simple little musical instrument will do.
- A prism. Light is beautiful.
- Laser pointer. Especially if a cat is nearby. Don't shoot your eye out.
- Singing bowl. Resonance is magic. My friend Aurora plays the bowl right on people's chakras. It's cooler than it sounds, and it sounds pretty damned cool.
- Playing cards. Fun for ESP experiments and speed-sorting games!
- I always like to have at least one paper book with which to play the "random page oracle game". Right now it's *The Gift: Poems by Hafiz the Great Sufi Master*.
- I Ching coins. Or Tarot cards. Or whatever divination aid you're into, if you're into things like that.
- Tissues. Tears may come, you might get caught up short in the woods...
- Gum/candy/mints. They're usually too bright-tasting for me, but some people go in for that kind of thing.
- Fruit and nuts. Don't leave fresh fruit in the bag in the closet.
- Magnifying glass. Check out cool stuff that's small.
- Spyglass. Check out cool stuff that's far away.
- Teddy bear. My teddy bear has psychedelic superpowers. If yours does too, bring it along.
- Phone with emergency numbers programmed in. This one can go in at the last minute.
- A bit of money can be handy, especially if you plan to go out and about.
- Herbal tea. This one is essential. I tend to go for teabags because they're easy to use and you can make one cup at a time.
- Hand warmers. Seuss Dean and I have an entire mythos that revolves around those little disposable chemical packets being the perfect trip anchors. They also warm your hands.
- Victory ice cream for when you're done. This goes in the bag last, and make sure it gets into the freezer when you arrive at the target area.



Now that I think about it, the contents of my carpet bag today are not that different from what they were on Maui. Kids and psychedelic explorers have a lot in common. Simple things can amuse both groups for hours, both are brimming with untapped creativity, and neither should be left unsupervised or allowed to get bored enough to watch TV. ●

Recommendations for Digitization of Archives

An Erowid Center Policy Statement

GOAL: To preserve important collections of psychoactive-related documents by archiving them online for maximum public accessibility across distance and time.

As the vanguard of psychedelic researchers and enthusiasts age, many are faced with the question of what to do with their collections of physical documents and artifacts related to psychoactives. Sometimes this question arises as end-of-life is being contemplated; other times it results from a change in interests or practical issues related to storage space or other physical constraints.

Erowid Center believes that creating and publishing a well-organized, high-quality digital archive is an important counterpart to the secure archiving of physical documents. Digital archives are faster to access and significantly easier to search than physical collections, adding value to physical collections as well as making documents and data available for everyone unable to travel to the original documents. Digital versions can also assist researchers planning a trip to an archive library by providing previews that help determine which items should be viewed during limited time on site.

As part of its mission, Erowid Center coordinates and/or assists with the digitization of select document collections pertinent to the science, culture, and history of psychoactive substances.

The general steps of our digitization process include:

- 1) Estimating the cost and duration of the digitization process
- 2) Retrieving the physical collection
- 3) Sorting and taking inventory of the collection
- 4) Evaluating what portion of the collection is sensitive and therefore will require trusted review before scanning and/or public access may be allowed
- 5) Setting standards for document treatment, scan quality, and OCR options
- 6) Selecting and arranging for specialists to scan and OCR the documents
- 7) Arranging for the special treatment of delicate or sensitive items
- 8) Auditing the post-scanned materials to confirm that the collection remains complete and in its original condition
- 9) Returning the physical collection to its owner or caretaker, organized and in secure, durable packaging

In cases where a collection includes recordings as well as written documents, every effort is made to retrieve and digitize this data and restore it to usable condition. This includes reel-to-reel, cassette, and vinyl audio recordings, as well as film, video, and photographs.

Once digital versions (such as PDFs) have been created from paper documents, they undergo their next stage in the process: they are organized and catalogued in a searchable database, which becomes part of the permanent Erowid Center online collection of documents, viewable at no cost to anyone with an Internet connection.

Erowid Center would like to encourage organizations and individuals who value the preservation of humankind's collective psychoactive

Creating and publishing a well-organized high-quality digital archive is an important counterpart to the secure archiving of physical documents.

heritage to seriously consider the advantages of ubiquitous Internet access to data, which can facilitate wider inquiry into the history of psychoactive substances.

Some important collections have been partially or wholly lost to natural disasters or the strain of poor storage. If your collection of papers, books, and other documents is one that future generations may want to access, please take steps to arrange for its digitization. ●

PROJECTS COMPLETED: In 2001, Erowid finished the digital archiving of the Albert Hofmann Collection, consisting of approximately 4,300 documents. Around 800 people view documents from this collection each day (300,000 per year).

Erowid Archiving Project Updates

Stolaroff Collection

In February, Erowid received scans of all of the items that were sent to professional scanning services from the Stolaroff Collection; nearly 5,000 unique items were digitized. The original paper documents have been returned, and most remain stored at Erowid Central until a time can be arranged to deliver them to the Stolaroffs in person. A small portion of the collection—about 350 private letters—was removed and shipped by request to the couple who penned them. A disc of all scanned materials was also provided to Myron's daughter Harriet.

Along with text materials, the Stolaroff Collection includes a couple dozen reel-to-reel recordings, many of which are unlabeled. To test the feasibility

Osmond; the second reel contains a non-dated trip report, in which Myron describes the first time that he took a 200 microgram dose of LSD. Unfortunately, while both companies did a reasonable job of transferring the recordings, there were some challenges. Although losses and audio gremlins are to be expected on magnetic tape that is over forty years old, the sound levels were quite low and marred by a distracting hum or buzz. Hoping to produce something a bit better, Erowid passed the discs along to volunteer J. Rizos, who remastered them and was able to boost the levels and remove much of the buzz. The

resulting sound quality, while not perfect, is substantially better and more pleasant to listen to. As this issue of *Extracts* goes to print, we have sent the remaining reels out for digitization, and will then have the files cleaned up as needed. Eventually, this audio will be published online, linked through the Myron Stolaroff Character Vault. We'll keep you posted.

Erowid now looks forward to the next step in making the Stolaroff Collection available online: the development of a keyword-searchable database, with abstracts for each document and audio file. Donations toward this phase of the project can be made at Erowid.org/donations/project_stolaroff.php.

Shulgin Lab Books

In April, the transcription of Shulgin Lab Book 1 was completed, including most of the proofreading. Volunteers are busy transcribing Lab Book 2, and the initial

pass of its first fifty pages is on target for completion by mid-June. So far, Book 2 appears to include more text than Book 1.

A software update following the installation of our new server hardware in April introduced problems with the way special characters are displayed, but with help from volunteers Zhah and Plutonic,

Along with text materials, the Stolaroff Collection includes a couple dozen reel-to-reel recordings, many of which are unlabeled.

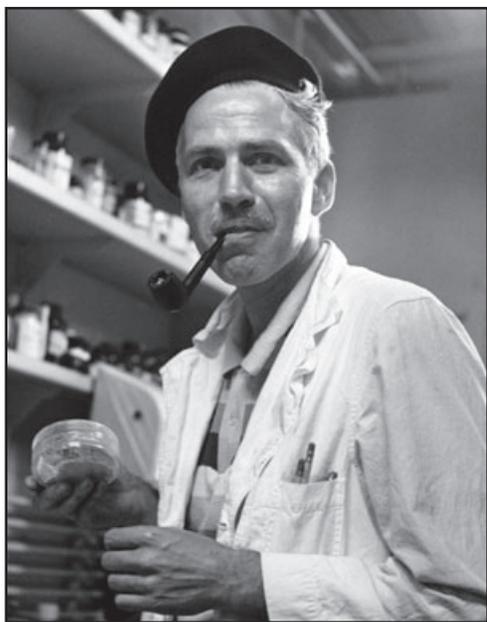
we were able to get the Greek letters Sasha used in his chemical notations to display properly.

Beyond Book 1 and Book 2, approximately 40 more lab books have been scanned and are in the process of being redacted to protect the privacy of individuals mentioned in their pages. Book 3 is scheduled to go online in a couple of months. If you are interested in assisting with the transcription of these historic notebooks, we can sure use the help. Please visit Erowid.org/volunteers for more information.

Meeting with Purdue

While at the Psychedelic Science conference in San Jose, CA, we had the opportunity to meet with a representative from Purdue University's Psychoactive Substances Research Collection. This special library collection was created to house physical documents related to the scientific research, medical applications, and therapeutic use of psychoactives.

At the meeting we were able to discuss several concerns we had about Purdue's policies regarding selection of materials and digitization plans. Our strong feelings that physical archiving needs to be accompanied by careful digitization and online publication are, in part, what led us to create a policy statement about this important topic. ●



A young Sasha Shulgin in the lab

of digitally archiving these, sample reels were sent to two companies specializing in audio data transfer. One of the reels contains a November 1, 1964 interview that Myron conducted with Humphry

The Distillation

The Distillation includes updates, statistics, and information that we hope will offer insight into the ongoing site additions, traffic, and projects currently underway at Erowid.

Summary

General Content Pages	14,805
Archived Site Pages	4,663
Experience Reports	20,208
References	7,435
Ask Erowid	574
The Erowid Review	244
Content Images	5,301
Visionary Art	1,997
Total	55,244

Erowid Files on Server	160,569
Erowid Disk Footprint	41.7 GB

Current Members	1,520
Daily Visitors	61,854

Content Details

General Content Pages	14,805
-----------------------	--------

Number of Substances Vaults	320
-----------------------------	-----

Most Popular Substance Vaults (with Change)

4-Methylmethcathinone (↑); MDMA (↑); LSD (↓); Cannabis (↓); Mushrooms (↓); Cocaine (↓); DMT (↓); Salvia divinorum (↓); Oxycodone (↓); Methamphetamine (↑); Morning Glory (↓); Ketamine (↔); DXM (↓); Heroin (↓); 2C-B (↓); Amanitas (↔); Datura (↓); Opiates (↓)

Most Accessed Documents

How to Grow Medical Marijuana; Drug Testing Basics; Understanding the 'Spice' Phenomenon; Cannabis Drug Testing; Mushroom Effects; LSD Effects; MDMA Effects; QT's DMT Extraction for Students; Cannabis Effects

New Character Vaults

Over the last six months, we have added more than a dozen noteworthy individuals to Erowid's Character Vaults. This section of the site was first created in late 1998, inspired by content from 41 of the character pages posted in the "People" section of the defunct Sputnik Drug Information Zone. Erowid currently has 106 entries in its Character Vaults.

PHOTOS BY JON HANNA
EXCEPT WHERE OTHERWISE NOTED.



PAGE 22

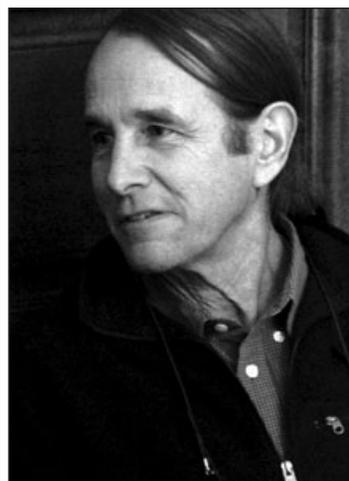
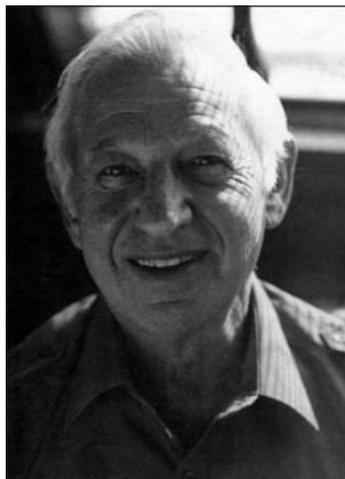
Howard S. Lotsof
photo by anonymous
Silvia Polivoy
Pablo Amaringo
Lorenzo Hagerty

PAGE 23, LEFT

Charles S. Grob
photo by Anne McAndrews
Robert Jesse
photo by Kyle Hailey
Leo J. Zeff
photographer unknown
Nick Sand

PAGE 23, RIGHT

Julie Holland
photo by Jessica Hills
Alicia Danforth
Amanda Feilding
Michael Mithoefer



Experience Reports

Published Reports	20,225
Published in Last 6 Mo.	723
Fully Triaged Reports	28,005
Partially Triaged Reports	2,361
Un-triaged Reports	12,923
Viewed Each Day	115,401
Submitted Each Day	13
Substances Included	717
Active Triagers/Reviewers	20

The Shulgin Index

In 2009, Erowid Center began assisting in the editing of *The Shulgin Index*, a chemistry reference patterned after *The Merck Index*. Written by Alexander T. Shulgin, Tania H. Manning, and Paul E. Daley, it is a chemical structure-oriented encyclopedia of 126 psychedelic phenethylamines and related compounds. It presents detailed physical properties, synthesis and analytical chemistry, biochemistry, pharmacology, and notes on the legal status for each of these substances. Tables provide information on additional lesser-studied structural homologs and analogs, with over 1,300 compounds covered in total.

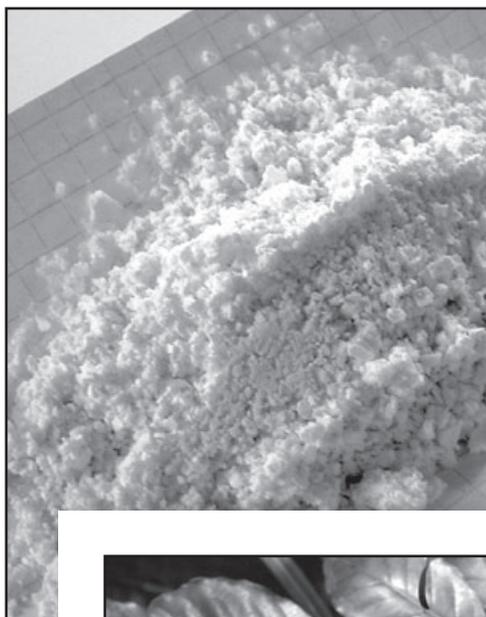
Several members of Erowid's staff participated in multiple meetings about this project at the Shulgins' home in 2009 and 2010. Assistance was sought from four senior chemists—Simon Brandt, PhD, Nicholas V. Cozzi, PhD, Tom Seeger, PhD, and Steve Ripple, DO, MD—who volunteered to review the book's content and provide commentary and editorial suggestions. Erowid created a custom version-management system to help facilitate this process. Professor Jonathan Taylor, PhD, was an invaluable help in obtaining copies of dozens of the papers cited, in order to double-check factual data presented. In addition, many hours of general editing and whip-cracking were completed by Jon Hanna, with the goal of making sure that a draft of the book would be available for browsing at the Psychedelic Science conference (see pages 4–7). Team Shulgin successfully produced this table copy as well as a poster introducing *The Shulgin Index*. At the conference, perhaps the top thing people were surprised to hear was that the book is a reference manual and does not include a narrative section like those found in *PIHKAL* and *TIHKAL*.

The Shulgin Index is currently undergoing final editing and layout; its estimated release is third quarter, 2010.

Image Vaults

Published Images	7,298	New in Last 6 Mo.	124
Image Vaults	293	Submitted Each Day	2.2
Viewed Per Day	33,725	Awaiting Processing	10,438

Ethylcathinone Powder, Photo by Dr. Oogie



Coffea arabica, Photo by Uriel5000

Two-Faced Chase

In late 2009, JPMorgan Chase and Facebook launched a “Community Giving” contest in which Facebook members could vote for their favorite charity to receive funding. Participants were told that the 100 charities garnering the most votes through a Facebook “app” would each win \$25,000.

When we learned of the contest (¾ of the way through the voting period), Erowid was already listed among eligible charities and had a few votes. We immediately let supporters know about the contest and asked for their votes. Our vote numbers began to look promising. Unfortunately, vote totals were hidden 48 hours before the contest ended. This made it impossible for the public to verify the winners, so we can’t know whether we raised enough votes to qualify.

SSDP and MPP tracked votes closely and likely both placed in the Top 100. However, they were left off of the list of winners based on the contest’s obscure Terms and Conditions, specifying it could disqualify any group “at its sole discretion”. Chase simply disqualified select winners and has refused to provide an explanation.

Thanks to our supporters who braved this awful Facebook/Chase experience on behalf of Erowid Center. Clearly the work done by Erowid, SSDP, and MPP is still too controversial for mainstream funding sources.

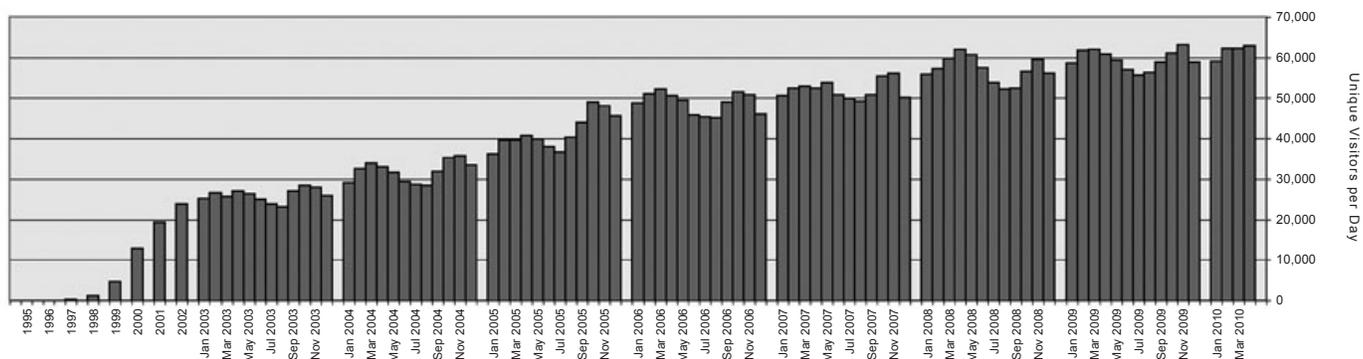
The Erowid Review

Published Reviews	235
Published in Last 6 Mo.	11
Viewed Each Day	1,347



Amphetamine (Generic Adderall) Capsules, Photo by Tink Diehl

Daily Erowid Visitors (1995–2010)



EcstasyData Gets a Booster

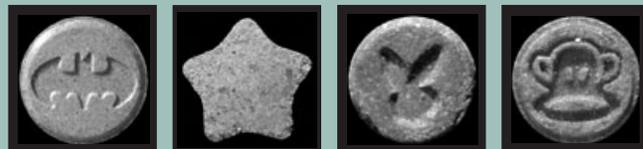
Ecstasydata.org has fresh funding, thanks to DanceSafe. The independent laboratory pill testing program run by Erowid Center and cosponsored by DanceSafe had not received a targeted grant in five years. This new funding has permitted a return to the low co-pay system. Anonymous submission of an ecstasy tablet for testing now requires only a \$40 (USD) co-pay rather than the full \$120 in testing costs. This means more results will be published over upcoming months than in past years. To accompany the relaunch, we have redesigned the site to improve its usability and give it a new look.

While EcstasyData continues to primarily display test results for ecstasy pills, some results have recently been included for drugs not sold as ecstasy. A dozen samples of other substances—clearly marked on the site as “Not Sold As Ecstasy”—have included cocaine (adulterated with levamisole), 5-MeO-DMT, and a chemical from Poland that the testing laboratory was unable to identify. The GC/MS analysis of this substance is included on the site.

EcstasyData Summary

2010	Daily Visitors	4,299	Daily Page Hits	15,142
		Results Posted	43	Daily File Hits

BY YEAR	Results Posted		Testing Results (1999–2010)	
	2010	43	Total Results Posted	1,847
	2009	127	MDMA Only (34%)	632
	2008	45	MDMA + Something (20%)	375
	2007	68	No MDMA (46%)	840
	2006	46	– Nothing	101
1996–2005	1,518	– Unidentified	77	



Membership

Current Members	1,520
Recently Expired Members (0–6 mo.)	349
Older Expired Members (6+ mo.)	4,436
Members in the United States	1103 (71%)
Members in Other Countries	448 (29%)
Countries with Members	38
Top Membership Countries	
USA (1103); UK (86); Canada (79); Australia (79); Germany (28); Netherlands (26); Norway (17); France (14); Switzerland (12); Sweden (11); Spain (10); New Zealand (8); Denmark (7); Mexico (7); South Africa (6); Brazil (6); Belgium (6); Finland (5); Italy (4)	

Erowid Traffic Statistics

DAILY	Visitors	61,605	File Hits	3,535,283
		Transfer	24.10 GB	Page Hits

BY MONTH		Avg Daily File Hits	Avg Daily Page Hits	Avg Daily Visitors
	Apr 2010	3,714,910	380,985	62,907
	Mar 2010	3,893,890	377,026	63,220
	Feb 2010	3,768,745	674,180	62,131
	Jan 2010	3,675,225	371,279	59,000
	Dec 2009	3,613,695	367,852	58,874
Nov 2009	3,679,620	395,202	63,051	

BY YEAR	2009	3,682,793	384,788	59,483
	2008	3,812,410	418,918	57,012
	2006	3,025,185	409,796	48,755
	2004	1,799,694	405,528	31,241
	2002	1,206,855	283,541	23,042
	2000	462,000	126,000	12,000
1998	31,200	8,500	1,000	

VERBATIM

“The first principle is that you must not fool yourself—and you are the easiest person to fool.”

— Richard Feynman (1918–1988)

“We sometimes talk as if ‘original research’ were a peculiar prerogative of scientists or at least of advanced students. But all thinking is research, and all research is native, original, with him who carries it on, even if everybody else in the world already is sure of what he is still looking for.”

— John Dewey (1859–1952)

“[...] I’m not anti-science, I’m anti the way science is sometimes used. Just because something is invented doesn’t mean you have to use it.”

— Charles, Prince of Wales (b. 1948)

“Marketing is the art of making something seem better than it really is.”

— Suso Banderas (b. 1976)

“Many a small thing has been made large by the right kind of advertising.”

— Mark Twain (1835–1910)

“A drug is neither moral nor immoral—it’s a chemical compound. The compound itself is not a menace to society until a human being treats it as if consumption bestowed a temporary license to act like an asshole.”

— Frank Zappa (1940–1993)

“One of the symptoms of approaching nervous breakdown is the belief that one’s work is terribly important [...].”

— Bertrand Russell (1872–1970)

“The outrageous is the reasonable, if introduced politely.”

— Charles Fort (1874–1932)

“[...] the most anyone can do is to confess as candidly as he can the grounds for the faith that is in him, and leave his example to work on others as it may.”

— William James (1842–1910)

Bin bilsen de bir bilene danış

[Even if you know a thousand things, still consult someone who knows one thing.]

— Turkish Proverb

“To look backward for a while is to refresh the eye, to restore it, and to render it the more fit for its prime function of looking forward.”

— Margaret F. Barber (1869–1901)

“Memories are like stones, time and distance erode them like an acid.”

— Ugo Betti (1892–1953)

“I have the most ill-regulated memory. It does those things which it ought not to do and leaves undone the things it ought to have done.”

— Dorothy L. Sayers (1893–1957)

“We can pool information about experiences, but never the experiences themselves. From family to nation, every human group is a society of island universes.”

— Aldous Huxley (1894–1963)

“Twenty years ago no one could have imagined the effects the internet would have—entire relationships flourish, friendships prosper [...] there’s a vast new intimacy and accidental poetry [...], not to mention the weirdest porn. The entire human experience seems to unveil itself like the surface of a new planet.”

— J. G. Ballard (1930–2009)

“Two quite opposite qualities equally bias our minds—habits and novelty.”

— Jean de la Bruyère (1645–1696)

“I think that the online world has actually brought books back. People are reading because they’re reading the damn screen. That’s more reading than people used to do.”

— Bill Murray (b. 1950)

“The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.”

— Dr. Seuss (1904–1991)

“Read in order to live.”

— Henry Fielding (1707–1754)

“What we become depends on what we read after all of the professors have finished with us.”

— Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881)

“Forgive me my nonsense as I also forgive the nonsense of those who think they talk sense.”

— Robert Frost (1874–1963)