

FATE ISN'T WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST

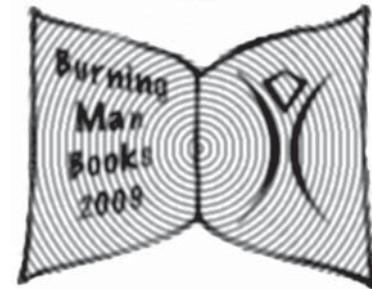


AN ELEVENTH ANTHOLOGY OF WRITINGS ABOUT PSYCHEDELICS

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EDITED BY RAYMOND SOULARD, JR. & KASSANDRA SOULARD

*Fate Isn't What
We're Up Against:
An Eleventh Anthology of
Writings About Psychedelics*

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Number Sixty-five

**Fate Isn't What We're Up Against:
An Eleventh Anthology of Writings
About Psychedelics**

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*Think on what that old man said
in the film Waking Life:
"As the pattern gets more intricate and subtle,
being swept along is no longer enough."*

*This rather simple epitaph
can save your hide,
your falling mind:
fate isn't what we're up against . . .
there's no design, no flaws to find,
there's no design, no flaws to find.*

The Shins, "Young Pilgrims,"
Chutes Too Narrow, 2003.

Initiation into Infinity

from *Remembrances of LSD Therapy Past*, 2002

“I could feel my tongue getting thick, and I couldn’t answer questions quite properly. It felt as though the messages were all coming into the switchboard, and messages were going out all right, but that the switchboard was congested and the two weren’t coordinating. As though the operator had something else on her mind or too much to do, and was just letting things get all jammed up”
(from LSD session report, October 1955).

The point of the Cohen-Fishman study was to compare the functioning of an individual under the drug and in his individual state. For this a battery of psychological tests were devised to measure the functioning of the individual as himself and after having taken the drug. In order to accomplish this, there were a number of tests chosen for measuring different aspects of the person: general intelligence, psychological functioning, psychological makeup, maturity, and general functioning ability as shown by the difference between the drug and non-drug states. Drug dosage was assigned according to body weight of the subject. Comparisons were made between the drug and non-drug states to get insights on the drug being tested.

In this battery, the individual tests had been given in some of the psychological tests like the “Draw a Person” (DAP), where the individual draws a picture about how he feels about himself and other people. The description of the drug experience continues:

Then I saw the color of the wall waxing and waning—ebbing and flowing. The extraordinary character of light and color . . . There was a third-dimensionality to color—and a constant change. And there would be a symphony of variations on what ordinarily is a plain brown wall . . . This was interesting—how dimension and color all were mixed up in that they were all part of the whole pulsating ebb and flow, and it took enormous effort to try and separate things out sufficiently to describe accurately what was happening.



Just before the colors hit and the curtain started down between sections of my brain, I had that wonderful relaxation which I had known before—the awe-inspiring relief, the letting go of psychological barriers which has come to be identified in my thinking with the relaxation of the ego. I could feel myself being drawn into a mystical experience—the sense of unity with all things in the universe . . . But as I felt the relaxing of the self boundaries, there was this flood of grateful tears which I stopped because of the three men present . . .

Searching through the accordion-pleated files of time for the context of that experience takes me back to 1955, to the beginning of LSD research in the western United States and to my own first knowledge of the drug. There was that notice on the UCLA Psychology Department requesting a graduate student for a doctoral thesis on the effects of a new and unusual drug. In the recesses of another fold of memory from who knows where or when, came: “I’ll bet that research is about LSD!” (There had been an article in *Look* magazine.)

I yearned to apply to Sidney Cohen, M.D., the author of that request, but I couldn’t; I had almost completed the work for my own infertility studies, and the time loss was much too great for my own dissertation on infertility. Next best was to send a friend, and one was handy, Lionel Fishman. He hadn’t seen the notice, but was very interested. However, before telling him the details, I extracted his promise that I be the first subject if indeed the research were on LSD. Lionel, or Fish, as we called him, talked to Dr. Cohen, signed on with enthusiasm, and didn’t forget his promise. After Dr. Cohen and Fish had their own trial experiences with LSD, I indeed became their first research subject. The original quotation at the beginning of this was part of the report on the LSD session.

I remember my intense interest in their study, but I didn’t have much time to kibitz, as I was dragging myself out of bed at 4:30 a.m., trying to finish my dissertation. I had passed the written doctoral exams at UCLA the spring of 1955, the same year that my son arrived to join his three-year old sister. (I figured that gave me an M.A. at least twice over—at school and at home.) I was pretty far along on my dissertation,

too, as I remember, at the point of getting judges to categorize the Rorschach responses of the women who couldn’t get pregnant as contrasted to women who had at least two children and no difficulty getting pregnant. At the same time, I was doing that pre-sunrise scene in order to write on the dissertation. I was in no position to add any other activities. .

But I did add just one—serving as subject for the Cohen-Fishman study. Lately, just recently, all I could remember of that first LSD experience was that I was constantly being interrupted in my LSD experience in order to take tests. In the Draw-a-Person I remembered the courtly French cavalier type I drew for the man. In contrast, my report—thank heaven for the necessity to write a report:

I wanted to draw Little Lord Fauntleroy . . . I didn’t want to put it down. But my honesty made me do it, although my defensiveness changed it into a courtier at the time of one of the Louis. That way it was more acceptable.

With the Draw-a-Person, one first draws the way one sees oneself. I had just remembered the courtier more strongly. Also, as I first remembered, the woman I drew was in a hoop skirt, I remembered this from the same period. (Ah, memory! The actuality of the first figure I drew, a woman, was quite different, thank heaven for records!)

I drew an old-fashioned little girl—and at the same time I really didn’t want to—knowing I was drawing myself. And I came up with a little girl where the head didn’t belong to the body. The legs were all grown up but the head was a vapid child’s head. And the dress was of the Victorian era.

It was a terrible experience to reveal oneself so clearly, and it was also humiliating to be asked to perform tasks when I couldn’t concentrate; I couldn’t think; and the tasks seemed meaningless and irrelevant. For instance:

It was the word association test, and I was completely set to cooperate and to give associations. But with the first word I realized

that it was impossible. There was no association present at all. It was as though the word had been released into a great bubble of space-time and hung suspended there. It had no relationship to anything. And since it was completely irrelevant, I couldn't even attempt to find a word to go along with it. It would be like trying to answer a question on color with a bar of music.

I tried to tell them what it was like—it was as though I was in the middle of a wide wonderful pasture—free and green and full of sunlight, and something was going on back at the fence that they wanted me to do. I was in the pasture, but the word association test was part and parcel of the fence—which is only an artificial barrier with no real intrinsic meaning to the freedom of the pasture. It was trivial, and there was no association of any kind, so I begged off. It was almost impossible to see how intelligent people could expect to find meaning to life (which was the pasture) in contemplating designs of the fence. And suddenly I saw the difficulty. Life is the warmth and the flowing and the three-dimensionality—but it comes overwhelming to a man who must compress it into one dimension and flatness and barrenness in order to deal with it. And this necessity to deal with it comes when he tries to go somewhere. It is the motion of trying to go—trying to get some place is the difficulty—it is the cause of the descent from Eden. Because the minute that one tries to go someplace or to “be” someone or something, then one is not content to let things be. In our ardor to “be” something, we lose personal life—and must content ourselves with this poor, flat, tawdry imitation . . . the illusion had become a reality.

Pretty heavy material!

In the session of January 10, 1957, I remembered telling Sid Cohen that I felt that LSD was a therapeutic drug, and that there were profound therapeutic implications to be examined with respect to its use. After my first LSD on October 10, 1955, I had worked very hard and finished my doctorate—not in March of 1956 because both kids got the mumps—but by the end of July. I had been meeting with Sid periodically about the LSD work because of the fascination I felt after my first session despite the frustration of being pulled back to reality to

perform the tasks. Sid gave me numerous reports of people who had taken LSD and what they had to say about their experiences. There may have been some mescaline reports among the LSD reports too.

As I remember, the majority of reports came from Al Hubbard's file. Al was the grand old man of LSD, of consciousness change. How he heard about the LSD, I'm not sure, but he had worked with mescaline and other substances, and he was the first explorer of the LSD universe on the West Coast. He was reputed to be a millionaire, and after he first tried LSD, he reportedly ordered 43 cases from Sandoz, and got them! And, “Captain” or “Dr.” Hubbard was the one who first gave LSD to Humphry Osmond, and perhaps Aldous Huxley and Gerald Heard. Al had worked with the mescaline before with Humphry Osmond. In fact, Al met Humphry because of Humphry's report on his working with mescaline.

Al also explored every mind-changing drug he heard about. My first memory of him is his arrival at our house carrying a tank of nitrous oxide and conning everyone present to having a whiff by extolling its virtues for psyche and soul.

Just wasn't only nitrous oxide that Al had—he had developed his own pharmacopoeia to “blow out the stuff” that stood in the way of a good LSD session, which to him meant having a mystical experience. He was for the preliminary “clearing away the problems,” and then giving one large dose to produce a transcendental experience. For instance, he had little white pills, called, I thought, mescaline-amphetamine, which caused people to open up and talk. In retrospect, I think it was methedrine with Al's fancy name. But even more important, as I remember it was on a later visit, he had tanks of oxygen and carbon dioxide. This was the first time he had experienced or seen the Meduna technique of inhaling “carbogen” for altered states of consciousness in order to help deal with psychological problems. I was to find that 6 to 10 inhalations, or “sniffs,” helped as preparation for my second LSD session, and then was useful in working to dissolve problems which arose afterwards.

Much later, Ernie Katz and I were taught by Lee Sanella to use carbogen (70% oxygen, 30% carbon dioxide) along with Ritalin—a technique which really “blew out the problems.” This was a remarkable

technique which patients hated more than any other but also knew how effective it was in helping solve psychological problems. I applaud it for the remarkable work it accomplished. What a buccaneer Hubbard was—large, rambling, and with his own private plane and special island on Puget Sound (which some gossip said belonged to a mysterious sponsor; this was in no way ever confirmed). We all felt as though he traveled with pockets full of magic and gold. From reports that I wrote at the time I can see how much love Al and his soft-spoken, insightful wife, Rita, for all they taught us about using drugs and also all the help they gave me when I was going through the aftermath of that traumatic second LSD session. The following gives a flavor of Al:

September 23, 1957

Dear Dr. Betty (which he always called me),

It gave us great pleasure to read your last letter, and to realize that my last one to you somehow jumped the semantic barriers and put across even in a small way which I desired to express . . .

I think I know that you believe I have some sort of block towards academic people, but really Betty, I do not. I think it is just that I expect so much more from them than they are able to give, and it is such a shock sometimes to realize how little it all really counts that I do perhaps rather take the attitude, 'Oh Hell, another dough-head.' Perhaps part of it is the years I have had in this work, and being only human after all, many times have had the experience of knowing that I have done a really good job, and it would not have cost some Doctor anything at all to have said it was good. After all, that is all outside of the knowledge that we are doing good work, and that is all I get out of it. I suppose as I advance in my own development this will all pass away, I sincerely hope so . . .

May 7, 1957

. . . I have no trouble in Canada as I work under authority of the Government of Canada . . .

As to your reference to Catholic doctor, I think this is an

excellent idea . . . I am perfectly aware that most of our people with their little personal God do not know my God of the Galaxies, and there is such a vast chasm between their God and my God that in most cases it would be impossible to bridge. The small group of mystics in our church who know what I am talking about and within whose authority I operate, are not very many compared with the five hundred million members . . .

Al formed The Commission for the Study of Creative Imagination with himself (and his questionable Ph.D.) as research director, with Humphry Osmond, Abram Hoffer, John Smythies, Sidney Cohen, Aldous Huxley, Gerald Heard, Henry Puharich, Hugh Keenleyside, and W. Kluhauf of Mexico City on the Board.

October 28, 1957

Dear Dr. Betty,

. . . I believe there are certain common experiences for all people in these things, and I believe as I believed before, one must have spiritual grace to allow them to enter into certain dimensions or levels or what you will to call them. Then they have to have the intellectual capacity to turn it into current language of our day, describing the symbolic experience that they went through. Some minds are just not capable of doing this and look upon the enormity of the things brought before them with its fringe of illusion mixed up with some hallucinations, and just say, 'Yes, I have lived many times before.' Then proceed to confabulate until they complete the 'acceptable experience of the objective mind.' This does not mean that the experience has not been valuable to them, but the capacity to appreciate it in full is missing . . .

Al Hubbard was a real and daring pioneer in drug work. He was first with so many things, and he never received the credit he deserved. But there were a lot of pioneers—Humphry Osmond, with his quiet and charming English gentlemanly way, his penetrating ideas, and his courageous spirit. He and Al Hubbard used to play intricate games in

the cosmos after having taken LSD or mescaline.

Next there was Aldous Huxley; no need to describe him—everyone knows of his scintillating mind, and what a path-forging person he was. He was also very kind to all of us who worked in the area. In fact, I never knew Aldous to be anything but kind to everyone. I'll never forget an argument he had with Tim Leary—a discussion as far as Aldous was concerned about the role of the cellular intelligence, to which Tim was assigning total credit with much heat and emphasis. “But, Timothy,” Aldous said patiently and gently, “lithe cellular intelligence is important. But there are other forms of intelligence, too.”

Gerald Heard, the English philosopher who was very interested in the LSD work at this time, was just as brilliant as Aldous, but he talked in paragraphs that ran for a page or two, and always had an esoteric association to the insight at hand. I had met Gerald Heard at Trabuco, a meditation retreat he and Felix Greene founded and built in southern California in the 1940's. I will never forget the Benedictine silence at Trabuco, and the meditation room, built in the three descending circular levels and fitted with black curtains so that it was a place where no light could ever penetrate—of the worldly type, that is. Gerald was very shy and reclusive in those days, but the consciousness-changing work made him much more outgoing and more inclined to work with others.

I realize that all this time I haven't described Sid Cohen, who at the time I met him was head of Psychosomatic Medicine at the Brentwood Veterans' Administration. He was the main rock-hard researcher who did not tolerate fools lightly. Sid had the look of an eagle about him, and much of the sharp-eyed, hard-nosed skepticism that might be said to accompany it. He was also enormously subject to data and facts, which made him a true scientist and opened his mind to experiences beyond those with which he might be familiar. He was also a penetratingly intelligent researcher and research supervisor; he should have had legions of devoted researchers to follow their combined hunches, something which he was able to do only for a certain period of time.

But something happened in later years, and Sid, who had done the definitive work on toxic psychosis, all sorts of research on psychedelics, and also wrote articles and a book on LSD, seemed to

have his perception change as time passed, into a bias against psychedelics. This might well have developed because of the wide appearance of the drug culture in the later years of his life. But then he was as excited as all the rest of us about LSD, levels of consciousness, our psychotherapeutic work, and the work and thinking of anyone who was using psychedelics creatively—and properly.

During this period, the fall of 1956 and early 1957, there was a boiling activity. We read report after report—dozens—of people who had taken LSD and/or mescaline. And we discussed them, Sid and I—and Al, and Humphry Osmond when he visited, and people like Tom Powers who came from the East Coast to experience LSD, bringing W. Wilson from AA on several trips. Everyone of the people wanted to talk about their experiences, experiences which were so unique that each one of us was busy trying to make sense of all the phenomena which were occurring, and to fit them into some intelligible description, category, and understanding.

Through the fascination of all of the personal reports of LSD sessions ran the thread of the therapeutic possibilities of the drug, which confirmed my own intuition from my first experience, fragmented though it was from all the tests I had taken. The more I read, the stronger I felt. I shared my feelings with Sid, and he agreed.

Little did I know, though, what I was getting into when I agreed to serve as the first subject (as far as we knew) to test the possible therapeutic potential of LSD. If I had known what was going to happen I doubt that I ever would have taken that fateful 100 gamma, the same dosage I had had at my first LSD session. (The report says my first time I was given 70 + 30 gamma, split.)

This time there was a difference, however. I was at least a little more prepared. I had the good sense to arrange for sitters for the children; I planned nothing for after the session, having learned from the experience following my first LSD. I ended up in chaos and total confusion and found myself putting the undried clothes carefully back into the washer after I had put them from the washer into the dryer.

After that first LSD session, I had to call my husband home from work because I was such a complete mess; I had no conception of what a disorienting experience LSD could be. No one had told me that—or that it could go on for hours or actually even days!

Lucky that I made those arrangements! After the second LSD I ended up, not in chaos and confusion, but with the blackest depression that anyone could dream up. Depression had never been a symptom I suffered from.

Many hours afterwards, in despair, I finally forced myself to especially call Sid for help. Sid sat through much of my session. It was shattering to find that our phone was out of order when I went to call. In profound physical and psychological distress, I walked to the corner to a pay phone, forced myself to wait in line, and called, finally reaching Sid.

He refused to take me seriously, saying to get a good night's sleep and all would be well in the morning. I clearly remember telling him that it wouldn't look good for the research if the psychologist who was the subject committed suicide. He was unimpressed.

Then I called my closest friend who had been with me through the whole eight hours of my LSD experience. She had taken a sleeping pill and was exhaustedly on her way to bed. The pill had begun to work, and not only was it impossible for her to come and help me, but she couldn't even talk long and coherently enough to help make sense of where I was. I can't remember what I did then in my despair, but I must have walked home. I know that I felt the universe had collapsed on me.

But our hypothesis had been proven! My friend told me as she delivered me home after the session that I had gone through the equivalent of 500 hours of analysis, something she knew only too well since she had been in analysis for many years with Dr. Otto Fenichel, a disciple of Freud's. Fine thing! The experiment was a success, but the patient was about to die!

In any case, in the midst of the profound depression, I may have saved my life, and I certainly saved my sanity, by searching through our library, book by book, until I came upon what finally helped. All night long I submerged myself in the writings of St. John of the Cross—that long, long night of the dark of my soul! Thirty-five years later, these are the memories which come into being about that session: the beginning with Mozart where there were all sorts of gleaming insects attacking my head, beautifully-colored insects which drilled into my skull; the ice princess and the gingerbread (man)—northern part and

southern, warmer parts. But, as before, I had mostly forgotten. From the report, written within the first 24 hours of the session, dated January 10, 1957:

Actually, I sort of expected a repetition of the freedom from self of the first session. But in reality I lived through a massive reduction of my defenses and habit patterns back to the very beginning of family identifications. All of these appeared in brilliant color, so, although I was conscious of what was going on, I might be said to have been hallucinating. I could stop the process when I wanted to, but I tried to ride the emotional and symbolic wave down to the bottom to understand the whole story.

Almost the whole process was acute agony—pure hell or purgation—and I realized it as such and spoke of it thus. It was purgation of the spirit through self-knowledge; not just insightful knowledge, but also emotional knowledge of a direct and actual and acute sort. Almost the whole time I realize that I was enclosed in a wall of the defense: I could see and feel the limitation. But several times the light broke through, and at the end when I was beaten and spent I began the ascent to the light of wholeness and integration . . .

I remember having the feeling of waiting, waiting—waiting for I knew not what. Then I saw spots of brilliant color in small flecks or squares—the pure color made when a prism diverts pure light. The flecks danced all over to the music and everything in between was gray. To the left was a sly fox with a bushy tail. I realized with anguish—because it became painful at the very beginning—that analysis is my first line of defense: I take reality and break it up into pieces because I cannot deal with it whole and pure. This makes flecks of extraordinary brilliant color, but the whole interplane is gray. And how foxy I think the defense of analysis is!

Then I saw a white church and spire against a mauve background, and this reminded me of a cardboard cover for a record—again, a defense against the pure music itself. I fought throughout the session to understand and associate to these symbols. The little white church with the high steeple at times had a woman

standing beside it. She was all bundled up in warm clothes—mauve with a white trim—and it was cold. The woman became in turn a madonna, a snow maiden, a snowman, and a gingerbread man . . . Sometimes the church would show just its bare bones—the ribbing like the prow of a ship, and then the woman became a figurehead. And at times the bare bones of the church changed into a magnificent cathedral with the shadow of the structure still upon it. And I realized that these were the planes of the prism which contaminated the pure soaringness of the church—the bones of my defensive system.

As I experienced these symbols I relived the myth of Nordic supremacy—to my horror. I was made to feel the coldness, the austerity, the separateness of the myth that Nordic people are superior to others. I realized that this had been built into me from earliest childhood. I felt its austerity and its coldness—anyone who must be superior pays the price of snow and ice. And through these symbols I released the racial intolerance back and down to my childhood where I was brought up in the South—and I loosened part of my own need for feeling superior. The first line of defense: analysis. The second line of defense: prejudice and intolerance . . .

In understanding the symbols I found the madonna and the gingerbread man were two halves of myself which I could not get together into a whole—they were stereotypes of my misperceptions of the masculine and feminine parts of my nature.

We followed this down—down through my relationships with sensitive men whom I had manipulated so that at times I felt I had driven them to the brink of death or insanity. I felt this in a violent way because the guilt and the misery of manipulation of the vulnerable was so overwhelming for me to face. I felt that I should be my brother's keeper, but instead I had used my brother to my own advantage. I saw this with terrible and excruciating clarity in terms of how I had sided against my brother and father; I who knew how he felt and should have protected him! And how this relationship of fundamental competitiveness had become displaced with the years onto my relationship with men.

As the guilt piled up, I felt that I killed my father, turned my mother toward insanity and made my brother neurotic and latently homosexual. And it was too much. I went off into a

tangential world and knew that I was insane. I could feel the enclosedness of it, the separateness, and worst of all—the symbolization. I saw giant mosquitoes which drilled into my skull and sucked out the brains. They were not alive but were mechanical—huge, impersonal, glittering insects with the flecks of brilliant color that were the sign of my analytic tendencies as decorations on their transparent, beautiful but completely dead wings. And they swarmed around in complete silence. I told the therapists that they would have to pull me through—or I didn't know what would happen.

Well, pull me through they did, by showing me that as a little girl I couldn't have been responsible for all those problems, but enough was left of the massive dose of self-awareness that it precipitated me into that profound depression.

I swore that I would never do that to a patient!

And we never did.

The Synthesis of Psychedelic Rock 1965-68

from *A History of Rock and Dance Music*, 2009

<http://www.scaruffi.com/history/cpt20.html>

Between 1963 and 1966 rock music took three decisive breaks from the original nature of rock'n'roll: Bob Dylan introduced an explicit socio-political message; British bands such as the Rolling Stones and the Who (the heirs to the “juvenile delinquent” image of the 1950s) indulged in instrumental and vocal mayhem; the Beach Boys, the Beatles and the Byrds focused on studio techniques and eccentric arrangements. Each of them embodied three different ways of using music as a vehicle: the profound bard, the street punk, the sound sculptor. The Rolling Stones and the Who personified an eternal and universal attribute of youth: rebellion. The Beach Boys and the Beatles were as removed as possible from their times (the Vietnam war, the civil-rights movement, the fear of the nuclear holocaust). Bob Dylan was all about his times. Dylan used music as a weapon, the Rolling Stones and the Who used it as an insult, while the Beach Boys and the Beatles were largely indifferent to the ideological turmoil.

The convergence of these three wildly different threads yielded the great season of psychedelic music, a genre that reflected the spirit of the time, that experimented with studio sound and that embodied the frustration of the youth.

The synthesis of 1966 was fueled by hallucinogens, as if drugs were the natural meeting point of the bard, the punk, and the sound sculptor. Most likely, it was a mere coincidence: drugs just happened to represent the unifying call to arms for that generation. It may as well have been something else. Drugs were conveniently available and stood for the opposite of what the hated Establishment stood for (war, bourgeois life, discipline, greed, organized religion, old-fashioned moral values).

If one had to pinpoint an event that concretized this historical

synthesis, it would have been in May 1966, when Dylan's *Blonde on Blonde* came out, a double album (already a significant departure from the old format) that had ironically been recorded in Nashville (between October 1965 and March 1966). Until then, rock musicians had all operated within the boundaries of the three-minute melodic song of pop music. After that album's release, only mainstream commercial music would remain anchored to the traditional song format of Tin Pan Alley. Albums with lengthy, free-form “songs” began to flow out of London, New York and Los Angeles: the Fugs' second album with Virgin Forest (recorded in January and released in March, thus actually beating Dylan), Frank Zappa's double-album *Freak Out* (recorded in March and released in June), the Rolling Stones' *Aftermath* (recorded in Los Angeles in March), the Velvet Underground's *The Velvet Underground & Nico* (mostly recorded in April and May), the Who's *A Quick One* (recorded in the fall), the Doors' first album (recorded in the summer), Love's *Da Capo* (between summer and fall), etc. Several of them had been recorded at the same time as Dylan's masterpiece, signaling a collective shift away from the pop song.

This shift in rock music (grafted onto the historical synthesis of the bard, the punk and the sound sculptor) coincided with the boom of “free jazz.” Rock'n'roll had been born at the confluence of blues and country music, but after 1966 blues and country/folk became mere ingredients (two among many) of a much more complex recipe. The lengthy “acid” jams of the Velvet Underground, of Jefferson Airplane, of the Grateful Dead and of Pink Floyd, relied on a loose musical infrastructure that was no longer related to rhythm'n'blues (let alone country music). It was, on the other hand, very similar to the format of jazz music played in the lofts and the clubs that many psychedelic rock musicians attended, and that had rapidly become the second great pillar of the counterculture (the first one being the movement for civil-rights and pacifism). Basically, the indirect influence of free jazz became prominent in rock music during the psychedelic era, fueling its musical revolution and emancipating rock music from its blues foundations. Before 1966, rock music had been more a part of the blues tradition than rockers wanted to admit; after 1966, rock music became more a part of the jazz tradition than rock musicians wanted to admit.

San Francisco and the Hippies

In 1965, San Francisco, whose scene had largely languished in the years of surf music and of the Greenwich Movement, suddenly became one of the most ebullient cities in the nation. The poets of the “Beat Generation” moved here; the “Diggers” turned the Haight Ashbury district into a “living theater.” Mario Savio founded the “Free Speech Movement” at the University of California at Berkeley, where sit-ins and marches were supported by the likes of Country Joe McDonald. There was excitement in the air. In the summer of 1965 a San Francisco band, the Charlatans, and their hippy fans took over the “Red Dog Saloon” in Virginia City (Nevada), and came up with the idea of playing a new kind of music for a new kind of audience. The Warlocks (later renamed the Grateful Dead) got hired by Ken Kesey to play at his “acid tests” (LSD parties), where the band began performing lengthy instrumental jams, loosely based on country, blues, and jazz. In October of that year, the Family Dog Productions organized the first hippy party at the “Long Shoreman’s Hall.” Following the success of that “festival,” avenues for San Francisco’s new bands sprang up all around. Those acts embodied the pacifist ideals that had been promoted by Bob Dylan, but with a far less political stance. Theirs was a philosophy of life (“peace and love” and drugs) that was in many ways the direct consequence of what Dylan had preached, but was also much closer to Buddhist philosophy. Hippies gathered not to march, but to celebrate; not to protest but to rejoice. The spiritual experience was preeminent over the political experience. This represented a dramatic change from the times of rock’n’roll, when the music was an (ultimately violent) act of rebellion.

Rock festivals were invented with the “Human Be-In” held in January 1967 at the Golden Gate Park (the “Gathering of the Tribes”). The hippy phenomenon was unique in that it became a mass movement that spread rapidly around the States (and the world) although it never had a leader. It was a messianic movement without a messiah.

Mostly, the music of the hippies was an evolution of folk-rock. It was renamed “acid-rock” because the original idea was that of providing a soundtrack to the LSD parties, a soundtrack that would reflect as closely as possible the effects of an LSD “trip.” This music was, in many

ways, the rock equivalent of abstract painting (Jackson Pollock), free-jazz (Ornette Coleman), and beat poetry (Allen Ginsberg). These phenomena had in common a loose structure in which form “was” the content, and an attitude of disregard for centuries-old aesthetic values. In music this meant that improvisation was as important, and arguably even more important, than composition. Acid-rock’s main invention was the “jam,” which, of course, had already been practiced by jazz and blues musicians. Acid-rock musicians jammed in a slightly different context: they placed more emphasis on the melody, less emphasis on the virtuoso performance. The most visible difference (besides the race of the musicians) was the lead role of the electric guitar. A more subtle difference was that the passionate, aching spirit of the blues was replaced by a transcendental, Zen-like spirit. The archetype for acid-rock was actually recorded in Chicago, by the white bluesman Paul Butterfield: “East-West” (1966), a lengthy piece that fused Afro-American and Indian improvisation.

From the instrumental point of view, acid-rock was still very much a descendant of rhythm’n’blues, but from the vocal point of view it was very much a descendant of folk and country music. The melodies and the harmonies were mostly inspired by the white tradition. 1966 was the year of the jam: “Virgin Forest” by the Fugs, Paul Butterfield’s “East-West,” “Up In Her Room” by the Seeds, “Going Home” by the Rolling Stones, “Sad Eyed Lady Of The Lowlands” by Bob Dylan,” etc. In the following years rock musicians would record increasingly more complex and lengthier pieces.

Jefferson Airplane were one of the greatest rock bands of all times. They not only embodied the spirit and the sound of the hippy era more than anyone else, but also counted on a formidable group of talents, that redefined singing (Grace Slick), harmonizing (Paul Kantner, Marty Balin), bass playing (Jack Casady), guitar counterpoint (Jorma Kaukonen) and drumming (Spencer Dryden) in rock music. Their early singles, “Somebody To Love” and “White Rabbit,” helped establish psychedelic-rock as a musical genre. The music of Jefferson Airplane was largely self-referential, and their career feels like a documentary of their generation. *Surrealistic Pillow* (1967) was a manifesto for the hippy generation. *After Bathing At Baxter’s* (1967), one of the greatest artistic

achievements of the psychedelic era, was the album that broke loose with the conventions of the song format and the pop arrangement. After *Crown Of Creation* (1968), a detour into transfigured folk-pop-jazz-rock lullabies and ballads, their supreme masterpiece *Volunteers* (1969) fused the backward trend towards a return to the roots (both musical and moral) and the forward trend towards hard-line politics. Paul Kantner's sci-fi and political concept *Blows Against The Empire* (1970) was a nostalgic look back to the ideals of the communes and a utopian tribute to the space age. *Sunfighter* (1971), credited to Paul Kantner & Grace Slick, was an adult and solemn return to the song format and to nature (an "ecological" concept). The sophomore album of the couple, *Baron Von Tollbooth & The Chrome Nun* (Dec 1972-May 1973), transformed the anthemic overtones of the Jefferson Airplane into a self-contained aesthetic. Their "marketing appeal" was precisely that they represented (and practiced) a new lifestyle, while, musically, they rarely challenged the song-oriented format the way other acid-rock bands did. Jefferson Airplane were partially accepted by the Establishment because they were still living in the world of pop music, because the folk and blues roots were still visible, because the melody was still the center of mass.

Others were reacting against all of the above. The Grateful Dead, considered by many to be "the" greatest rock band of all times, were a monument of San Francisco's hippy civilization and, in general, a monument of the psychedelic civilization of the 1960s. Their greatest invention was the lengthy, free-form, group jam, the rock equivalent of jazz improvisation. Unlike jazz, in which the jam channeled the angst of the Afro-American people, Grateful Dead's jam was the soundtrack for LSD "trips." But soon it came to represent an entire ideology of escape from the Establishment, of artistic freedom and of alternative lifestyles. Contrary to their image of junkies and misfits, the Grateful Dead were one of the most erudite groups of all times, aware of the atonal compositions of the European avant-garde as well as the modal improvisation of free-jazz and the rhythms of other cultures. They managed to transform guitar feedback and odd meters into the rock equivalent of chamber instruments. The infinite ascending and descending scales of Jerry Garcia are among the most titanic enterprises

ever attempted by rock music. The Grateful Dead never sold many records; their preferred format was the live concert, not the record. They literally redefined what "popular music" was; the live concert shunned the laws of capitalism, removing the business plan from entertainment. Their recorded masterpieces, *Anthem Of The Sun* (1968), *Aoxomoxoa* (1969) and *Live/Dead* (1969), are mere approximations of their art. *Anthem Of The Sun* was refined in studio using all sorts of effects and techniques. The band looked at Karlheinz Stockhausen, John Cage, and Morton Subotnick (not Chuck Berry) for inspiration. The Dead's blues and country roots were horribly disfigured by hallucinogenic fits, thus disintegrating song structure and development. Each piece became an orgy of amoebic sound: drums beat obsessive tempos to reproduce the pulsations of an LSD trip; electronics painted nightmarish and ecstatic soundscapes; gloomy keyboards moaned mysteriously like ghosts imprisoned in catacombs; guitars pierced minds and released their dreams into the sky; voices floated serenely over the maelstrom. Arrangements overflowed with tidbits of harpsichord, trumpet, celesta, etc. But overall the feeling was one of angst, enhanced by the jungle of dissonances and percussions. The lengthier improvisations sounded like chamber music for drunken junkies. (Credit goes to producer Dave Hassinger for overdubbing different performances and creating a "multi-dimensional" feeling, i.e. an extreme version of Spector's "Wall of Sound"). Rhythm and melody had become pure accessories. *Aoxomoxoa* repaired part of the damage, by moving back towards the traditional song format. *Live/Dead*, instead, returned to their true dimension with tracks such as "Feedback," one lengthy monolithic "trip" by Garcia's guitar, and "Dark Star," the Dead's terminal jam and the swan song of acid-rock. At the same time, though, their free-form jams were born out of a philosophy that was still profoundly rooted in the American tradition. They were born at the border between the individualistic and libertarian culture of the Frontier and the communal and spiritual culture of the Quakers. Despite being ostracized by the Establishment, the Grateful Dead expressed, better than any other musician of that age, the quintessence of the U.S., and perhaps that was precisely the reason that their music resonated so well with the soul of the American youth. It is not a coincidence that the Grateful Dead, along with the Byrds and Bob Dylan,

led the movement towards country-rock, via *Workingman's Dead* (1970) and Jerry Garcia's solo album *Garcia* (1972). The band spent their adult years trying to transform the subcultural idiom of the hippies into a universal language that could reach out to every corner of the planet (not only the hippy communes). They succeeded with a form of intellectual muzak which interpreted the lysergic trip as a cathartic escape from daily reality and liberation from urban neuroses: "Weather Report Suite" (1973), "Blues For Allah" (1975), "Shakedown Street" (1978), "Althea" (1980). In practice, their art was a psychological study on the relationship between the altered states of the mind (psychedelic hallucinations) and the altered states of the psyche (industrial neuroses).

The early San Francisco bands had to cope with a record industry that completely misunderstood them. The big companies were dying to exploit the hippy phenomenon, but they balked at the odd music that these hippies were playing. Producers were paid specifically to destroy the original sound and to "normalize" the jams (in other words, to "Beatles-ize" acid-rock).

While previous music scenes around the world had revolved around a specific style (such as Mersey-beat or rhythm'n'blues or surf music), the San Francisco Bay became the place where anything was allowed. In fact, pretty much the only thing that was not allowed was to replicate someone else's sound. Originality was mandatory, whereas talent was optional.

The album recorded in 1967 by the Charlatans, *The Charlatans*, was not released until 1969.

Kaleidoscope were among the most adventurous with the fusion of country, jazz, cajun, Middle Eastern, Indian, flamenco, gypsy and South American music propounded on *Side Trips* (1967) and *A Beacon From Mars* (1968), the latter including "Taxim" (possibly raga-rock's all-time masterpiece).

Mike Bloomfield's Electric Flag debuted with *The Trip* (1967), a bizarre mixture of electronics, noise, psychedelia, country, ragtime and blues.

Moby Grape embodied the casual and magical spirit of the acid jams on *Wow/Grape Jam* (1968), and on Skip Spence's solo album *Oar* (1969).

Quicksilver Messenger Service, one of the greatest jam bands of the acid-rock scene, bridged San Francisco's acid-rock, the garage sound of the Northwest and Chicago's rhythm and blues, particularly on *Happy Trails* (1969), whose lengthier tracks are bold pan-stylistic cavalcades that take blues as the starting point but aim for the inner self.

Mad River were also influenced by the blues on *Mad River* (1968) and *Paradise Bar And Grill* (1969).

Blue Cheer, on the other hand, played blues-rock with a vengeance: *Vincebus Eruptum* (1968) introduced a terrifying sound (deafening guitar and bass amplification), that challenged the whole "hippy" ideology and predated stoner-rock by 25 years.

Steppenwolf unleashed two of the hardest-hitting anthems of this loud and fast acid-rock: "Born To Be Wild" (1968), which contains the expression "heavy metal" that would come to identify a new genre, and "Magic Carpet Ride" (1968).

At the other end of the spectrum, Fifty Foot Hose, one of the most experimental bands of the 1960s, and one of the first to employ electronics and to bridge rock music and the avant-garde, recorded *Cauldron* (1968), challenging the placid atmosphere of acid-rock with the cacophonous and chaotic sound of their apocalyptic "freak-out" jams.

By the time these bands reached the recording studios, the golden age of acid-rock had already ended thanks to two highly-publicized events in the summer of 1967: the Monterey Pop Festival (that legitimized the format) and the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (that legitimized the sound). During that summer, the "alternative" became "mainstream." The anti-commercial spirit of acid-rock became a contradiction in terms. The following year, the hippy bands embraced country-rock and returned to the traditional song format. That summer drew young people from all over the U.S. The term "Summer of Love" became commonplace (although one can argue that the real "summer of love" had taken place one year earlier, unbeknownst to most of the media).

There was also a sociopolitical reason for the sudden demise of the hippy movement. Hippies had never truly represented the intellectual class. They had represented the average young man from the middle

class, who was afraid of being drafted for the Vietnam War and dreamed of a world without nuclear weapons. Left-wing intellectuals had different priorities, and subscribed to the notion that some degree of urban guerrilla warfare was necessary in order to change the Establishment. The hippies were only one of the facets of the counterculture. In 1968 the tide turned, and violent protests became more popular than peaceful ones. The peace movement was hijacked by revolutionaries of a different caliber, and its soundtrack (acid-rock) became anachronistic.

New York and the New Boheme

Even during its heyday, San Francisco was not all psychedelic-rock. Bands such as the Velvet Underground had little or nothing in common with the San Francisco bands. They represented the culture of heroin (which was a more sinister, neurotic, nihilistic culture) rather than the culture of LSD (which was bucolic, dreamy, and utopian). The Velvet Underground scavenged the narrow alleys of the bad parts of town, and scavenged the subconscious of the urban kid, for emotional scraps that were a barbaric by-product of the original spirit of rock'n'roll. Their goal was only marginally the sonic reproduction of the psychedelic experience; their true goal was to provide a documentary of the decadent, disaffected, cynical mood that was spreading among the intelligentsia. These were not hippies, these were elitist musicians who were aware of the *avant-garde* movements; they began playing (in 1965) as part of Andy Warhol's multimedia show "The Exploding Plastic Inevitable." They originated the "pessimistic" strand of psychedelic music (as opposed to San Francisco's optimistic strand). The Velvet Underground remain probably the most influential band in the entire history of rock music. Above all else, they originated a spirit of making music (independent, nihilistic, subversive) that ten years later would be labeled "punk." Rock music as it is today was born the day the Velvet Underground entered a recording studio. *The Velvet Underground And Nico* (1967), recorded in the spring of 1966, includes an impressive number of masterpieces (mostly penned by Lou Reed and John Cale, and sung by Nico): the cold, spectral, autumnal odes of "Femme Fatale," "All Tomorrow's Parties," and "Black Angel's Death Song"; the percussive boogie of

"Waiting For The Man"; the orgasmic chaos of "Heroin"; the dissonant tribal music of "European Son"; the Indian raga imbued with decadent spleen of "Venus In Furs." They are immersed in the dark, oppressive atmosphere of German expressionism and French existentialism, but they also exhaled an epic libido; each song was a sexual fetish, and a cathartic sado-masochistic release. It was difficult to find a precedent for the Velvet Underground's music because these barbarians were attuned to the classical lieder and to LaMonte Young's minimalism, while they borrowed very little from rock'n'roll and pop music. Although less impressive, *White Light White Heat* (1968) contains "Sister Ray," which probably remains the ultimate, definitive masterpiece of rock music, an epic piece that rivals Beethoven's symphonies and John Coltrane's metaphysical improvisations. The *1969: Velvet Underground Live* (1974) album contains a few more uncontrolled jams in the style of "Sister Ray." The mellow ballads of *Velvet Underground* followed in 1969, and "Sweet Jane" (1970) was a decadent pop song that would be influential on glam-rock. By praising drug addiction and deviant sex, the Velvet Underground reveled in a whole new category of hedonistic rituals. Their albums evoked a Dante-esque vision in which the border between hell and paradise was blurred. Their songs were also unique in the way they fused funeral elegy and triumphal anthem; they were terrible and seductive at the same time. Semiotically speaking, those songs constituted "signs" by means of which reality was encoded in sounds: the metropolis was reduced to an endlessly pulsing noise, daily life was reduced to an unconscious delirium, and everything, both public and private, was clouded in pure, Freudian libido. The Velvet Underground's hyper-realism was deformed by a mind constantly in the grip of drugs and perverted fantasies. At the same time, their music was a visionary chaos from whose fog the mirage of a better world could rise. Their music was always majestic, even when sinking into the depths of abjection.

The rest of the New York contingent pales in comparison to the Velvet Underground. The Blues Magoos released one of the earliest psychedelic albums, *Psychedelic Lollipop* (1966); and Mystic Tide released some of the earliest psychedelic anthems, notably "Frustration" (1966) and "Psychedelic Journey" (1966).

Psychedelic-rock would soon become as formulaic as any other genre. Few bands ventured outside the dogma, and those who did died in obscurity. For example, Devils' Anvil played a unique Middle Eastern acid-rock, immortalized on *Hard Rock From the Middle East* (1967).

Tom Rapp's Pearls Before Swine were perhaps the greatest band venturing into psychedelic folk during the 1960s. Their two masterpieces, *One Nation Underground* (1967) and especially *Balaklava* (1968) are mosaics of atmospheric songs that defy classification, evoking the hallucinated state of Dalí's surrealism, lushly arranged, and influenced by both classical and jazz music. Each album is performed by a veritable "chamber ensemble": organ, harmonium, piano, harp, vibraphone, English horn, clarinet, celesta, banjo, sitar, flute, and so on.

Also typical of New York's artistic milieu were Cromagnon, who released one of the most radical, futuristic and frightening albums of the era, *Orgasm* (1969).

Bizarre and eclectic arrangements featured prominently on *United States Of America* (1968), the one and only album released by Joseph Byrd's United States Of America, a hodgepodge of sonic experiments that can be hardly called "songs." One of the most significant albums of that era, it is also one of the first albums on which a whole range of keyboards (not just piano or organ) paint most of the soundscape. There are hints of cut-up techniques, atmospheric jazz ballads, and futuristic lounge music—ideas that would be resumed three decades later. Byrd's surrealistic music-hall was the opposite of the Fugs' political theater. A better definition for this kind of music is the title of Byrd's solo album, *American Metaphysical Circus* (1969).

Los Angeles and Acid-Pop

Psychedelic-rock in Los Angeles clearly descended from the Byrds, but it rapidly split into several camps: the poppy, stereotyped novelty number, best represented by Strawberry Alarm Clock's *Incense And Peppermint* (1967); the wild, raw, bluesy rave-up, influenced by the Rolling Stones, whose archetype were the Seeds, violent, lascivious punks who cut the unpleasant albums *Seeds* (1966) and *A Web Of Sound* (1966); the lengthy, intoxicating guitar-driven improvisation, whose

heroes were Iron Butterfly, the band that released an album titled *Heavy* (1968) before the term "heavy metal" was coined, and concocted an exciting, feverish blues-psychedelic jam, the title-track from *In A Gadda Da Vida* (1968). The fragile and dreamy music of *Part One* (1967), by the West Coast Pop Art Experimental Band, was probably the closest thing to San Francisco's acid-rock that Los Angeles produced.

Love were representative of three different stages in psychedelic-rock: their roots in folk-rock, still evident on the naive *Love* (1966); after digesting blues, jazz and raga, the full-blown creative maturity of their masterpiece *Da Capo* (1967); their baroque apex, when, influenced (like everybody else) by the Beach Boys' *Pet Sounds*, the band adopted the lush pop arrangements of *Forever Changes* (1967).

Of all creative bands in the history of rock music, the Doors may have been the most creative. Their first album, *The Doors* (1967), contains only masterpieces ("Light My Fire," "Break On Through," "Crystal Ship," "Soul Kitchen," "End Of The Night," and the most suspenseful song in the history of popular music, "The End") and, as a collection of songs, it remains virtually unmatched. Jim Morrison may well be the single most important rock frontman. He is the one who defined the rock vocalist as an artist, not just a singer. Ray Manzarek's style at the keyboards was at the vanguard of the fusion of classical, jazz, soul, and rock music. The virulence of some of their riffs bridged the blues-rock era and the hard rock era. Whether it was him, Manzarek or guitarist Robbie Krieger or all of them, their songs exhibit a unique quality that has never been repeated. They are metaphysical while being psychological and even physical (erotic and violent). They are the closest thing rock music has produced to William Shakespeare. Partly Freudian psychodrama and partly shamanic/messianic invocation, Doors songs were always more than "songs." The fact that they borrowed elements from blues, Bach, and ragas was less relevant than the fact that they represented suicidal self-inflicted agonies. They continuously referenced death; sex, drugs and death made up the Doors' triune reality. Each one was ecstasy and annihilation. The supernatural quality of their hymns was not gothic, but rather imbued with the fatalism of the French Symbolists. Death was the ultimate aspect of that trinity, as Morrison found out in 1971. The music spanned a broad range of styles, a fact

best epitomized by the long instrumental break in “Light My Fire,” where Krieger’s guitar intones a raga while Manzarek’s organ weaves a Bach-ian fugue and both improvise jazz-like. The Doors made at least three more albums that proved their talent, *Strange Days* (1967), *Waiting For The Sun* (1968) and *L.A. Woman* (1971), but never managed to repeat the feat of their first album.

Jim Morrison represented a new kind of sexual persona. Elvis Presley’s animal magnetism, which made him an idol of the teenagers of the 1950s, was largely a white impersonation of black (forbidden) sexuality. His moves and his voice were simulating black stereotypes. The teenagers who fell for his charade were mainly well-behaved children of the middle class. A decade later Morrison employed a completely different technique, which made Presley obsolete: Morrison’s sexuality was demonic. Morrison placed his sexuality at a higher “forbidden” level. Morrison’s act was also different from Presley’s act in that it was not a travesty; it was real life. Presley only pretended to be a juvenile delinquent, whereas Morrison had all the intentions of being the (perverted and suicidal) character that he played. Morrison’s audience was an audience of similarly deviated youths.

Technically speaking, Spirit were even more talented than the Doors. They recorded some of the most adventurous albums of the psychedelic era, frequently employing elements of jazz and classical music and pre-dating progressive-rock. *Spirit* (1968) and *The Family That Plays Together* (1968) toyed with an erudite fusion of blues, jazz, raga and rock, while *Twelve Dreams Of Dr. Sardonicus* (1970) marked a move towards overwrought (and electronic) arrangements.

Psychedelic-rock was a bonanza for Los Angeles producers, because it gave them the excuse to indulge in all sorts of bizarre arrangements. Producer Ed Cobb contributed to psychedelic-rock via an artificial band, San Jose’s the Chocolate Watchband, who are credited with his *The Inner Mystique* (1968). David Axelrod penned the *Mass In F Minor* (1968) by the Electric Prunes, the first “rock mass.” But Music Emporium’s *Music Emporium* (1969) was more sophisticated than anything the seasoned producers concocted.

Texas and the Freak-Out

The psychedelic school in Texas, on the other hand, was one of the most authentic and uncompromising. The 13th Floor Elevators were among the earliest psychedelic bands: *The Psychedelic Sound Of* came out in the autumn of 1966. Like the Seeds in Los Angeles, their ferocious sound harkened back to the Rolling Stones. Roky Erickson was the demonic front-man and Stacy Sutherland was the quintessential fuzztone and reverb guitarist, but Tommy Hall was the real brain behind the project, both in terms of sound (thanks to his electric jug) and in terms of ideology (he merged psychedelic culture with Eastern philosophies and Western science).

Red Crayola, later renamed Red Krayola, were one of the greatest psychedelic bands of the 1960s and probably of all times. They played extremely wild and cacophonous music that was decades ahead of its time. They predated Germany’s expressionistic rock (Faust) and American new wave (Pere Ubu). Their “freak outs” were closer to John Coltrane’s free-jazz and to Jackson Pollock’s abstract paintings than to rock’n’roll. Their leader, Mayo Thompson, was a composer who ranks among the greatest musicians of his time (classical, jazz, rock). His revolutionary compositional style had few stable coordinates. His pieces float not because they are ethereal but because melody and rhythm are left “loose.” They are organisms that rely on supporting skeletons that are falling apart as they move. Thompson placed his art firmly in the iconoclastic tradition that Frank Zappa had just founded, and simply increased the amount and the speed of noise. *Parable Of Arable Land* (1967) is one of the milestones of rock music, a carousel of savage harmonic inventions/sabotages. *God Bless the Red Krayola and All Who Sail With* (1968) was even closer (in spirit if not in sound) to the likes of Edgar Varese and John Cage. It is not a coincidence that Thompson was rediscovered by the new wave ten years later: his *Soldier Talk* (1979) could have well been the album of the Pere Ubu (the band he eventually joined).

Euphoria’s *A Gift From Euphoria* (1969), on the other hand, offered an odd combination of orchestral pop ballads, country-rock, distorted psychedelia and sound effects.

The Spreading of the Disease

Another martyr of psychedelia, Jimi Hendrix, was one of the greatest icons of the 1960s. His death in 1970 still stands as one of the crucial events in the history of rock music, one of the dates that divide two eras. His work may be less important than his image, as too many of his albums were below average. Hendrix was, after all, one of the most exploited artists of all times (many more albums were released after his death than during his lifetime). Hendrix made only two amazing albums: the first and the third, *Are You Experienced?* (1967) and *Electric Ladyland* (1968). His greatest achievement was to coin a new guitar style, a style that amounted to a declaration of war against western harmony. Born at the crossroads between Chicago's blues, Memphis soul, and Charlie Christian's jazz improvisation, Hendrix's style was an excruciating torture of tonal music. His astral glissandos bridged the historical suffering of African slaves and the existential angst of European philosophers. A black man, Hendrix always used the blues as the basis for his improvisation, but then used the whole human body to play and distort the sound of the guitar. The guitar became a sacrificial totem for an entire generation. A cosmic hymn such as "Third Stone From The Sun" was fueled toward higher dimensions by the heroic guitar workout. The blues agony of jams such as "Voodoo Chile" was pushed to new psychological levels by the endless guitar pyrotechnics. Tracks such as "1983 (A Merman I Should Turn to Be)" flirted with free-jazz and *avant-garde* music to achieve a form of "sound painting." On the album *Band Of Gypsies* (1970) Hendrix was indulging in endless acrobatics. Hendrix's guitar opened new doors to experimental music. His lesson would be applied not only to guitar but also to keyboards and to whatever instrument would lead a rock song. His legacy as a guitarist is comparable to Beethoven's legacy as a symphonist.

Baroque arrangements (flute, clarinet, harpsichord) enhanced the compositions of the Chicago band H.P. Lovecraft, whose most accomplished album was *II* (1969).

Another Chicago band, the Amboy Dukes, laid the foundations for both heavy-metal and progressive-rock with the complex and energetic compositions of *Journey To The Center Of The Mind* (1968) and *Marriage On The Rocks/Rock Bottom* (1970).

Ultimate Spinach were the most significant psychedelic band from Boston. They specialized in sophisticated suites such as "Ballad Of The Hip Death Goddess," from *Ultimate Spinach* (1967) and "Suite: Genesis Of Beauty (In Four Parts)," from *Behold And See* (1968). They, too, predated progressive-rock.

A Canadian band, L'Infoni, inspired by the cacophonous chaos of Captain Beefheart and Red Crayola, but also by Pierre Henry's *musique concrète*, by Sun Ra's cosmic jazz, and Frank Zappa's dadaistic sketches, and obsessed with the digit 3, released *L'Infonie (also known as Volume 3)* in 1969, performed by 33 musicians; *Volume 33* in 1970; *Volume 333* in 1972; and *Volume 3333* in 1974.

Indirectly, psychedelic-rock also permeated melodic ("bubblegum") rock, as visible in American Breed's "Bend Me Shape Me" (1967), Steam's "Na Na Hey Hey Kiss Him Goodbye" (1970), Ohio Express' "Yummy Yummy Yummy" (1968). In Michigan, Tommy James roared "Mony Mony" (1968) and moaned "Crimson And Clover" (1968).

Britain and the Light Show

British psychedelia was a very minor and very late phenomenon, with one notable exception: Pink Floyd. In the summer of 1966, Joel and Tony Brown, who had worked for LSD guru Timothy Leary in the U.S., exported to London the "light show," which became immediately a major sensation. At the same time, upon returning from a journey to the U.S., disc-jockey John Ravenscroft (better known as John "Peel") began broadcasting psychedelic music during his radio show "Perfumed Garden." In December 1966, the UFO Club was inaugurated to foster the new phenomenon. In April 1967, dozens of bands played at the "14 Hours Technicolour Dream," which was de facto the first rock festival. In August 1967, the whole of Europe joined in at St. Tropez. The following year a hippy festival was held at the Isle of Wight, and more (larger and larger ones) would follow.

Creation were the first psychedelic band to cause a sensation, but it was Pink Floyd that soon became the reference point for the entire school.

Pink Floyd devised a compromise between the free-form tonal

jam, the noisy, cacophonous freak out, and the eccentric, melodic ditty. This amalgam and balance was inspired and nourished by Syd Barrett's gentle madness on their first two albums, their psychedelic masterpieces: *The Piper At The Gates Of Dawn* (1967), that includes the pulsating, visionary trips of "Astronomy Domine" and "Interstellar Overdrive" (the bridge between space-rock and cosmic music); and *A Saucerful Of Secrets* (1968), that contains the stately crescendo and wordless anthem of "A Saucerful Of Secrets" and the subliminal raga of "Set The Controls For The Heart Of The Sun." The ambitious *Ummagumma* (1969), a failed albeit intriguing attempt at establishing their credentials as *avant-garde* composers, and the eponymous suite from *Atom Heart Mother* (1970), a failed albeit intriguing attempt at merging rock band and symphonic orchestra, marked the end of the epic phase. Barrett had already departed, and the new quartet led by bassist and vocalist Roger Waters was more interested in sculpting sound for the sake of sound, with each musician (guitarist David Gilmour, keyboardist Richard Wright and percussionist Nick Mason) becoming a virtuoso at his own instrument. For better and for worse, Pink Floyd understood the limits and the implications of the genre, and kept reinventing themselves, slowly transforming psychedelic-rock (a music originally born for the hippies that had been banned by the Establishment) into a muzak for relaxation and meditation (aimed at the yuppies who are totally integrated in the Establishment). The other half of *Atom Heart Mother* already hinted at the band's preference for the languid, mellow, hypnotic ballad, albeit sabotaged by an orgy of sound effects. "Echoes," the suite that takes up half of *Meddle* (1971), sterilized and anesthetized the space-rock of "Interstellar Overdrive," and emphasized not the sound effects but meticulous studio production. Pink Floyd did not hesitate to alter the letter and the spirit of psychedelic music. The delirious and cacophonous sound of their beginnings slowly mutated into a smooth and lush sound. Rather than just endorsing the stereotypes of easy-listening, Pink Floyd invented a whole new kind of easy-listening with *Dark Side Of The Moon* (1973) and *Wish You Were Here* (1975). The former was a collection of high-tech songs propelled by funky rhythms and shaped by electronic effects. The latter was basically the high-brow version of the former, a concept on primal states of the mind such as fear and madness that set the devastated psyche of the narrator (Roger Waters) in the context of a

tragic and oppressing *Weltanschauung*. The futuristic anthem "Welcome To The Machine" was actually a symphonic requiem for layers of electronic keyboards and romantic guitar. A tactical move soon became a strategic move. In the end, Pink Floyd reshaped psychedelic music into a universal language, a language that fit the punk as well as the manager, just like, at about the same time, jazz-rock was "selling" the anguish of the Afro-American people to the white conformists. Roger Waters' existential pessimism and historical angst became the pillars of the band's latter-day melodramas, such as *The Wall* (1979). These monoliths of electronic and acoustic sounds, coupled with psychoanalytical lyrics, indulge in a funereal pomp that approaches the forms of the requiem and the oratorio.

Nobody could compete with Pink Floyd, in terms of both artistic achievement and influence. However, Tomorrow, featuring drummer John "Twink" Alder, recorded one of the most eccentric albums of that season, *Tomorrow* (1968), and Hapshash & The Coloured Coat did even better with *Featuring The Human Host And The Heavy Metal Kids* (1967).

The Incredible String Band was Scotland's premier hippy commune. Their album *5,000 Spirits or the Layers of the Onion* (1967) introduced medieval and Middle Eastern music into folk-rock. Their masterpiece, *Hangman's Beautiful Daughter* (1968), is a hyper-creative stew of hypnotic exorcisms, magical and pagan rituals, Indian music, Donovan-esque lullabies, baroque music, all drenched in exotic instrumentation and psychedelic chanting. Following their example, an impressive number of British bands released an impressive number of inferior albums that relied on the fusion between psychedelia and folk—among them, the Trees' *The Garden of Jane Delawney* (1970), Forest's *Full Circle* (1970), Dr Strangely Strange's *Heavy Petting* (1970), Clive's Original Band (C.O.B.)'s *Moyse McStiff* and the *Tartan Lancers of the Sacred Heart* (1972).

Great Britain never had a counterculture movement in the early 1960s, a counterpart to Country Joe and the Fugs. It didn't have much of a pacifist movement, a Bob Dylan or a Free Speech Movement that could compare with the originals. There were no student riots in 1964, there was no need to create an alternative political world to fight the Establishment. Instead, it was the psychedelic movement that led to the

development of an underground infrastructure (magazines, clubs, radio stations). In Britain, psychedelic music played the role that the Greenwich Movement had played in the USA.

Once that infrastructure was in place, the political wing of the movement was allowed to emerge.

The leading agit-prop band was the Deviants, which were born as the British version of the Fugs, but soon developed an even more iconoclastic and unpredictable sound via *Ptooff!* (1967), their masterpiece, *Disposable* (1968), *III* (1969) and Mick Farren's solo album *Mona The Carnivorous Circus* (1970).

Also following a cue from the Fugs, Edgar Broughton clearly represented the fusion of psychedelic and political elements on *Wasa Wasa* (1969).

Euro-Psychedelia

However, one of the greatest of the European psychedelic bands was not British but Swedish: Parson Sound, whose 1966-1968 compositions would not surface until 2001. Their main influences were minimalist composer Terry Riley, who at the time was inventing a musical aesthetic founded on repetition, and pop-art guru Andy Warhol, who, at the time, was experimenting with the droning music of the Velvet Underground. Renamed International Harvester, they later released *Sov Gott Rose-Marie* (1968), a wild fusion of psychedelia, minimalism, raga, folk, jazz and sounds of nature.

Their only competitors were Italy's Le Stelle di Mario Schifano, a musical event put together by decadent-futuristi pop artist Schifano the same way Andy Warhol put together the Velvet Underground. They composed a cacophonous suite "Le Ultime Parole di Brandimarte, dall'Orlando Furioso" (with the instructions "to be listened with the TV on and no volume"), off their only album *Dedicato A* (1967), one of the most experimental tracks of the time.

Brazil's Os Mutantes concocted a high-volume maelstrom of dissonant guitar, musique concrete, found sounds and pop melodies on albums such as *Os Mutantes* (1968) and especially *Mutantes* (1969).

The Outsiders in Holland were also notable, thanks to their *CQ* (1968). But Holland's most popular export was Shocking Blue's

feverish "Venus" from *At Home* (1969).

The Czech band Plastic People of the Universe was the main psychedelic act of Eastern Europe (unreleased until 1978).

Last but not least, the open French ensemble of Les Maledictus Sound released one of the most psychedelic albums ever, *Les Maledictus Sound* (1968).

The classical *avant-garde* was, indirectly, helping the creative freedom of this era. The marriage between rock and classical music was fostered by rock composers such as Frank Zappa, but also by classical composers such as Pierre Henry, whose *Rock Electronique* (1963) employed electronic riff and rhythm, and whose rock mass, *Messe Pour Le Temps Présent* (1967), that mixed symphonic, rock and electronic instruments. In 1964 Charles Dodge and James Randall started "computer music." In 1965 Terry Riley and Steve Reich were performing music based on repetition of simple patterns ("minimalism"), an idea that shared with psychedelic-rock the hypnotic and mystical qualities.

White Angel

Published July 25, 1988 in The New Yorker

We lived then in Cleveland, in the middle of everything. It was the sixties—our radios sang out love all day long. This of course is history. It happened before the city of Cleveland went broke, before its river caught fire. We were four. My mother and father, Carlton, and me. Carlton turned sixteen the year I turned nine. Between us were several brothers and sisters, weak flames quenched in our mother's womb. We are not a fruitful or many-branched line. Our family name is Morrow.

Our father was a high school music teacher. Our mother taught children called "exceptional," which meant that some could name the day Christmas would fall in the year 2000 but couldn't remember to drop their pants when they peed. We lived in a tract called Woodlawn—neat one- and two-story houses painted optimistic colors. Our tract bordered a cemetery. Behind our back yard was a gully choked with brush, and beyond that, the field of smooth, polished stones. I grew up with the cemetery, and didn't mind it. It could be beautiful. A single stone angel, small-breasted and determined, rose amid the more conservative markers close to our house. Farther away, in a richer section, miniature mosques and Parthenons spoke silently to Cleveland of man's enduring accomplishments. Carlton and I played in the cemetery as children and, with a little more age, smoked joints and drank Southern Comfort there. I was, thanks to Carlton, the most criminally advanced nine-year-old in my fourth-grade class. I was going places. I made no move without his counsel.

Here is Carlton several months before his death, in an hour so alive with snow that earth and sky are identically white. He labors among the markers and I run after, stung by snow, following the light of his red knitted cap. Carlton's hair is pulled back into a ponytail, neat and economical, a perfect pinecone of hair. He is thrifty, in his way.

We have taken hits of acid with our breakfast juice. Or rather, Carlton has taken a hit and I, considering my youth, have been allowed

half. This acid is called windowpane. It is for clarity of vision, as Vicks is for decongestion of the nose. Our parents are at work, earning the daily bread. We have come out into the cold so that the house, when we reenter it, will shock us with its warmth and righteousness. Carlton believes in shocks.

"I think I'm coming on to it," I call out. Carlton has on his buckskin jacket, which is worn down to the shine. On the back, across his shoulder blades, his girlfriend has stitched an electric-blue eye. As we walk I speak into the eye. "I think I feel something," I say.

"Too soon," Carlton calls back. "Stay loose, Frisco. You'll know when the time comes."

I am excited and terrified. We are into serious stuff. Carlton has done acid half a dozen times before, but I am new at it. We slipped the tabs into our mouths at breakfast, while our mother paused over the bacon. Carlton likes taking risks.

Snow collects in the engraved letters on the headstones. I lean into the wind, trying to decide whether everything around me seems strange because of the drug, or just because everything truly is strange. Three weeks earlier, a family across town had been sitting at home, watching television, when a single-engine plane fell on them. Snow swirls around us, seeming to fall up as well as down.

Carlton leads the way to our spot, the pillared entrance to a society tomb. This tomb is a palace. Stone cupids cluster on the peaked roof, with stunted, frozen wings and matrons' faces. Under the roof is a veranda, backed by cast-iron doors that lead to the house of the dead proper. In summer this veranda is cool. In winter it blocks the wind. We keep a bottle of Southern Comfort there.

Carlton finds the bottle, unscrews the cap, and takes a good, long draw. He is studded with snowflakes. He hands me the bottle and I take a more conservative drink. Even in winter, the tomb smells mossy as a well. Dead leaves and a yellow M & M's wrapper, worried by the wind, scrape on the marble floor.

"Are you scared?" Carlton asks me.

I nod. I never think of lying to him.

"Don't be, man," he says. "Fear will screw you right up. Drugs can't hurt you if you feel no fear."

I nod. We stand sheltered, passing the bottle. I lean into Carlton's

certainty as if it gave off heat.

“We can do acid all the time at Woodstock,” I say.

“Right on. Woodstock Nation. Yow.”

“Do people really *live* there?” I ask.

“Man, you’ve got to stop asking that. The concert’s over, but people are still there. It’s the new nation. Have faith.”

I nod again, satisfied. There is a different country for us to live in. I am already a new person, renamed Frisco. My old name was Robert.

“We’ll do acid all the time,” I say.

“You better believe we will.” Carlton’s face, surrounded by snow and marble, is lit. His eyes are bright as neon. Something in them tells me he can see the future, a ghost that hovers over everybody’s head. In Carlton’s future we all get released from our jobs and schooling. Awaiting us all, and soon, is a bright, perfect simplicity. A life among the trees by the river.

“How are you feeling, man?” he asks me.

“Great,” I tell him, and it is purely the truth. Doves clatter up out of a bare tree and turn at the same instant, transforming themselves from steel to silver in the snow-blown light. I know at that moment that the drug is working. Everything before me has become suddenly, radiantly itself. How could Carlton have known this was about to happen? “Oh,” I whisper. His hand settles on my shoulder.

“Stay loose, Frisco,” he says. “There’s not a thing in this pretty world to be afraid of. I’m here.”

I am not afraid. I am astonished. I had not realized until this moment how real everything is. A twig lies on the marble at my feet, bearing a cluster of hard brown berries. The broken-off end is raw, white, fleshly. Trees are alive.

“I’m here,” Carlton says again, and he is.

Hours later, we are sprawled on the sofa in front of the television, ordinary as Wally and the Beav. Our mother makes dinner in the kitchen. A pot lid clangs. We are undercover agents. I am trying to conceal my amazement.

Our father is building a grandfather clock from a kit. He wants to have something to leave us, something for us to pass along. We can

hear him in the basement, sawing and pounding. I know what is laid out on his sawhorses—a long raw wooden box, onto which he glues fancy moldings. A single pearl of sweat meanders down his forehead as he works. Tonight I have discovered my ability to see every room of the house at once, to know every single thing that goes on. A mouse nibbles inside the wall. Electrical wires curl behind the plaster, hidden and patient as snakes.

“Shhh,” I say to Carlton, who has not said anything. He is watching television through his splayed fingers. Gunshots ping. Bullets raise chalk dust on a concrete wall. I have no idea what we are watching.

“Boys?” our mother calls from the kitchen. I can, with my new ears, hear her slap hamburger into patties. “Set the table like good citizens,” she calls.

“Okay, Ma,” Carlton replies, in a gorgeous imitation of normality. Our father hammers in the basement. I can feel Carlton’s heart ticking. He pats my hand, to assure me that everything’s perfect.

We set the table, spoon fork knife, paper napkins triangled to one side. We know the moves cold. After we are done I pause to notice the dining-room wallpaper: a golden farm, backed by mountains. Cows graze, autumn trees cast golden shade. This scene repeats itself three times, on three walls.

“Zap,” Carlton whispers. “Zzzzzoom.”

“Did we do it right?” I ask him.

“We did everything perfect, little son. How are you doing in there, anyway?” He raps lightly on my head.

“Perfect, I guess.” I am staring at the wallpaper as if I were thinking of stepping into it.

“You guess. You guess? You and I are going to other planets, man. Come over here.”

“Where?”

“Here. Come here.” He leads me to the window. Outside the snow skitters, nervous and silver, under streetlamps. Ranch-style houses hoard their warmth, bleed light into the gathering snow. It is a street in Cleveland. It is our street.

“You and I are going to fly, man,” Carlton whispers, close to my ear. He opens the window. Snow blows in, sparking on the carpet. “Fly,” he says, and we do. For a moment we strain up and out, the black night

wind blowing in our faces—we raise ourselves up off the cocoa-colored deep-pile wool-and-polyester carpet by a sliver of an inch. Sweet glory. The secret of flight is this—you have to do it immediately, before your body realizes it is defying the laws. I swear it to this day.

We both know we have taken momentary leave of the earth. It does not strike either of us as remarkable, any more than does the fact that airplanes sometimes fall from the sky, or that we have always lived in these rooms and will soon leave them. We settle back down. Carlton touches my shoulder.

“You wait, Frisco,” he says. “Miracles are happening. Fucking miracles.”

I nod. He pulls down the window, which reseals itself with a sucking sound. Our own faces look back at us from the cold, dark glass. Behind us, our mother drops the hamburgers sizzling into the skillet. Our father bends to his work under a hooded light bulb, preparing the long box into which he will lay clockworks, pendulum, a face. A plane drones by overhead, invisible in the clouds. I glance nervously at Carlton. He smiles his assurance and squeezes the back of my neck.

Psychedelics and Alchemy

*Excerpts from a talk given at the Mind States conference,
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I believe that shamanism is based upon a gnosis that most humans have forgotten. This gnosis is that we are eternal, multidimensional entities living an illusory mortal existence in three-dimensional space. The human birthright is to regain this gnosis and learn how to function fully in both physical and metaphysical realms—for our own good, that of our species, and of the planet itself. Powerful forces are now pushing those of us ready for it to a full realization of these powers.

Mircea Eliade has said that shamanism dependent upon psychotropic substances is a decadent form; Terence McKenna asserts that psychedelic shamanism is the only legitimate kind. I want to offer an integration which honors the truth of both positions. Psychedelics, or entheogens, are extremely valuable tools in the Work, but they are often abused by those who don't understand how to use them. I think the reason our culture has such substance abuse problems can be directly traced to the fact that we have forgotten our shamanic roots; not only do we lack contemporary models for the use of consciousness-altering catalysts, but we have a taboo against knowing ourselves. We no longer even possess clear structures for how to know ourselves. Let's begin by looking at that.

Psychedelics have the capacity to both unify and fragment consciousness. Most people who have experimented with these substances with any frequency know that the highest gnosis that psychedelics offer is that “we are all one.” Our consciousness has been unified: we know the whole. This is the state of awareness variously called “satori,” “samadhi,” “nirvana,” etc. in Eastern religions. The gurus tell us that anything less than this state of unified awareness is illusion.

The opposite of wholeness of course, is separation from the

whole: we see component parts rather than their integration. Such perception on psychedelics typically evokes a fear response: awareness sees itself as a discrete entity surrounded by other entities regarded as “other,” as “not-me.” The “wholeness” of the observer is challenged because that which is “not-me” is always a potential enemy. This stems from our life-long experience as differentiated beings living in a multiverse of other differentiated beings: fear of others is a legitimate response for any organism living on a planet where predator and prey relationships determine survival.

Both realities are true; we are all one but we are also all separate. Nevertheless, the first gnosis is a good deal more pleasant than the second. This unique quality of psychedelic drugs to reveal both realities of existence suggests a comparison with one of the fundamental secrets of alchemy:

Solve et coagula, et habebis magisterium.

(Dissolve and bind, and you will have the magistry.)

A magistry (a masterpiece) is an alchemically exalted preparation which is always prepared from a whole, e.g., a medicinal plant.

The preparation first requires the separation of specific constituents, after which they are purified and again combined.

—Manfred Junius, *The Practical Handbook of Plant Alchemy*, Healing Arts Press, Rochester, VT 1979, 1985, 1993.

Anyone who has studied alchemy knows that the true goal of the Work was not the literal transmutation of “lead into gold” of popular folklore, but the transformation of the alchemist’s consciousness into a state of enlightenment—which is to say, a state of unified perception. The “dissolve and bind” formula, when applied to human awareness, means that one differentiates (dissolves, separates) all the disparate aspects of one’s personality, purifies them, then recombines them into a “masterpiece,” a transcendent state of consciousness. This is an exact formula for the attainment of enlightenment and, knowing that, we can use psychedelics consciously as catalysts for inner work.

In psychological terms, one analyzes (*solve*) one’s complexes, then recombines and synthesizes them (*coagula*) into a harmonious whole.

In typical practice, you begin by coming to terms with your early childhood; then you recognize how your complexes inhibit your freedom; having navigated those labyrinths, you get a handle on your life work; you contact your essence and reconcile your ego illusions with the intent of your authentic self, your essence. And so on.

Unfortunately, many people get no further than blaming Mom and Dad for their dysfunctions. That’s just the beginning of the journey. Until you can authentically purify (which is to say, reconcile and integrate) those forces in your psyche, you’re still stuck in the first phase of the Work.

Analysis and synthesis then, is a universal formula for completing the Great Work of Transformation. It goes without saying that this formula is deceptively easy to understand, but extremely difficult to accomplish. (That’s why they call it the “Work”—it is work: it is the heaviest labor you’ll ever undertake!) In plain English, the alchemical canon says: take it apart, purify the parts, then put them back together again. If you succeed at this, the final whole will be a totally different substance from the whole with which you started.

I am reminded of a Zen proverb:

Before I was enlightened, mountains were mountains and rivers were rivers.

While on the path to enlightenment, mountains were no longer mountains and rivers were no longer rivers.

After I was enlightened, mountains were again mountains and rivers were again rivers.

This is just another way of describing the *solve et coagula* formula of alchemy. First you deconstruct the mountains and rivers (which is to say, your everyday reality) to know them in their substance; then you put them back together again, purified of illusion. Actually, “you” don’t do this; your essence does it for you—all that is required of the ego is disciplined cooperation, which is to say, devotion to the Work.

Another example: In 1846, when Henry Thoreau was at Walden Pond there were millions of humans on the planet who lived lives as simple as he did. In those days, any peasant in what today we call the

“Third World” lived outwardly no differently than Thoreau did. An anthropologist from another planet comparing only their outward lifestyles would see no differences between them; they both chopped wood, they both carried water. Yet Thoreau was living in a much different reality than, say, the average Russian peasant. For both of them, mountains were mountains and rivers were rivers, but Thoreau’s mountains and rivers were of a different order of being-ness. That’s because he had attained gnosis: he understood both the forest and the trees which made it up.

A verse from the *Tao Te Ching* illustrates this idea perfectly:

*Oftentimes, one strips oneself of passion
In order to see the Secret of Life;
Oftentimes, one regards life with passion,
In order to see its manifest forms.*

The “Secret of Life” mentioned here is the gnosis that we are all one, that the highest reality is unitive. In alchemical terms, we cannot really know that unity, we cannot have true gnosis, until we have experienced all the “manifest forms”—only then can we claim to truly know the whole. The simple peasant, living in a state of nature, can be said to know a kind of wholeness, but it is an innocent, an unconscious state. To know any whole completely it must be fragmented so that its component parts can be understood. During this phase of the Work, by definition, mountains and rivers cannot be whole entities.

Psychedelics, because of their capacity to fragment and unify the psyche, are extremely useful tools for furthering the Work but, like anything else in spiritual practice, they can be dangerous in the hands of anyone who does not understand how to use them. Indeed, they can be dangerous in the hands of those who do understand how to use them—the path grows more treacherous the closer one gets to the goal. History records that there were lots of alchemists, but few adepts. The situation is no different today; many a bleached bone is found only three feet from paradise.

In my own experience, I eventually reached a point where psychedelics had to be left behind—continued reliance upon them

inhibited rather than furthered my development. That doesn’t mean that I never ingest entheogens; it means that I no longer rely on them for my most serious work. At this phase of my journey, they usually obstruct more than they enlighten.

Megadose blasts into hyperspace are useful for two reasons: they will convince you of the reality of other worlds and, if you’re lucky, they will introduce you to your essence. In time, however, you will come to realize that most shamans work with “homeopathic” doses—doses which enable them to do work in the space in which they find themselves. A fully informed ego is essential to the Work, and when you relinquish shamanic control, you leave yourself open to cosmic tricksters whose sole agenda is to hinder your spiritual growth. Don’t worry: anyone who walks their path with will and intent will recognize this fork in the road if and when they come to it.

But in the beginning, psychedelics were crucial to my inner development. I often wonder where I would be now if I’d never had the revelations that these substances offered me. In my case, the *solve et coagula* formula came backwards: my first psychedelic experience, 300 micrograms of LSD, was one of complete harmonic unity. My journey began with the *coagula* portion of the equation. I know now that my essence was giving me an experience of the goal of the Work—at that time of my life I had no concept at all of what it was that I was seeking. Essence knew that once I’d experienced this state of awareness I would never rest in this lifetime until I’d attained it permanently. (I still haven’t attained it, by the way.) I quote from my book, *Psychedelic Shamanism*:

I began to experience what can only be described as samadhi: “the final stage in the practice of Yoga, in which individuality is given up while merging with the object of meditation.” For the first, and alas, to date the only time in my life, I was “allowed” to experience the unspeakable bliss of total unity and integration. Subject and object became one—there were no questions because all that existed was a pristine “answer” in and of itself: perfectly related to everything else in seamless unity. There was no good or evil, no right or wrong, only perfection in and of itself.

While under the influence of the entheogen, mountains were mountains and rivers were rivers, but in a way I'd never dreamed possible. When I returned to consensus reality eight hours later, mountains were no longer mountains and rivers were no longer rivers—the world from which I'd started my trip was changed forever. You can't go home again after an experience like that. It goes without saying that I had a rough time reconciling the two realities. I've never met anyone on any path who claims that it's easy. Thus begins the Great Work of Transformation.

My second acid trip showed me the *solve* half of the alchemical equation. It was one of the most terrifying experiences of fragmented awareness that I've ever known. My world was torn asunder, and nothing my ego could do could put it back together again. Again I quote from my book:

I, strange as it seems now, actually became afraid of myself! Not only afraid of myself, but afraid of everything around me—the walls, the floor, the bookcase, my hand, my shoes—everything became a total threat to “myself,” of whom I was also afraid and who besides that didn't exist anyway—an appalling enough thought in its own right! Talk about double and triple binds! I was drifting in a confused sea of pure terror without any ego-structure to hold onto for reference. Only someone who has had a bad acid trip can understand what I'm trying to describe here.

My greedy ego was seeking the total samadhi of my first LSD experience, but my essence had another lesson in mind. Mountains were definitely not mountains, and rivers were definitely not rivers—nothing, absolutely nothing in my environment was what it had been before. It was an experience of the total deconstruction of reality. At that time I had no concept at all of the alchemist's *solve et coagula* equation. Those first two acid trips could not have been more opposite in nature. Though I didn't realize it yet, I'd been given a koan to solve.

It was in trying to reconcile those two experiences that, years later, I came to understand their relationship to the alchemical secret of inner development: the solution to the koan. It was also my first inkling that essence is a very demanding teacher. To quote Lao Tze: “Essence is unkind: he treats the ego and its complexes like sacrificial straw dogs.”

(It is my understanding that in ancient China, little dogs were woven out of straw to be ritually thrown into a fire as burnt offerings.) Essence is indeed unkind—if, once the Work has begun, the ego can't or won't keep up with him, he'll burn you up and start over. Beware! Beware! Once you make the choice, you can't not do the Work—one of my best friends tried to cop out of it and died within a year of cancer.

Essence is that portion of our awareness residing in the unconscious psyche. For me, “essence” is synonymous with Jung's concept of the “self.” Your essence is the immortal portion of your awareness, quite distinct from the mortal ego—which will not last longer than this earthly incarnation. When Jim DeKorne dies, he will disappear from this planet and his life experience will be absorbed into his essence, a much larger identity in hyperspace. The attainment of this relatively simple gnosis is one of the most crucial phases of the work because the ego has transcended the illusion that it is the center of the psyche. Suddenly, usually painfully, one knows that mountains aren't mountains and rivers aren't rivers. Not until ego and self become integrated will they reassume their identities on a much higher level of awareness. That level of integration is relatively rare during physical incarnation because it implies a transcendence to god-consciousness—we can experience it sometimes on psychedelics, but seldom do we operate from such consciousness all day every day.

I met my essence on an acid trip. It's worth quoting at length:

On the morning of February 18, 1979 I took LSD again after a gap of about three years. As I sat in my easy chair waiting for the effects of the drug to begin, I felt a sudden impulse to get up, go into the next room, and remove an antique Mexican machete from where it had been hanging on the wall for at least a decade. Like many items used only for decoration, this one had by now become so familiar as to be invisible—I don't recall having paid any real attention to for it for years. Indeed, it was shamefully covered with dust.

I'd purchased this machete in 1965 at the Toluca Market outside of Mexico City. It was hanging in the back of a stall operated by a used tool and parts vendor who sold battered hammers, bent

screwdrivers, grease-caked Crescent wrenches, rusty motorcycle chains—that sort of thing. The machete is obviously fairly old (I estimate early 20th Century—sometime around the Mexican Revolution), and well used, with many nicks and scratches and a splintered handle. There is a “dicho,” or proverb engraved on the blade:

Nada del mundo es verdad por 10 que mi ojos ven. In English we would translate it: “Nothing in the world is true that meets the eye,” or, more freely: “Everything is an illusion.” It’s a curious saying: I’ve never thought of it as a typically Mexican Catholic sentiment—if anything, it sounds Buddhist.

For some reason I wanted to hold this machete, and as the LSD began to alter my consciousness I held it tighter and tighter . . . it was beginning to manifest the energies of a “power object.” Soon it felt like the machete was some kind of psychic lightning rod for forces to enter my body—at that point I don’t think I could have let go of it if I’d wanted to.

Now the drug was coming on strong and I was suddenly very, very stoned. The machete vibrated with authority and seemed to pull me from my chair, across the room and out the door into the yard, where I was forcibly thrown to my knees on the ground. For the first, and so far the only, time in my life I heard a distinctly clear voice speaking to me from within my own head. The voice was nothing that I could identify with as “me” or even a portion of “me.” It was totally Other, and it asked a question:

“Do you take responsibility?”

I didn’t really know what that meant—take responsibility for what? Yet I knew that it was important to say yes—taking responsibility was certainly a “responsible” thing to do, and I’ve always believed in being responsible.

“Yes.”

The energy level of the voice increased one full octave:

“Do you take responsibility!”

“Uh—sure. Yes.” I was deeply intoxicated, and quite confused by the repetition of the question.

Now the numinosity and power of the voice doubled again,

becoming suddenly very, very scary.

What was I dealing with here?

“Do you take responsibility!!!”

“Yes! I take responsibility!” I had no idea of what I was taking responsibility for, but I knew that I must be equal to it, whatever “it” was.

Now we crossed the line into “something else”—these goddamned acid trips! Why did I continue to do this to myself? Flashback replays of my second voyage into LSD terror . . . It was now nothing less than the voice of God demanding:

“DO YOU TAKE RESPONSIBILITY!!!!”

I was no longer sure that I wanted that much responsibility, yet somehow I felt certain that if I’d said “no,” I would have dropped dead on the spot: the voice’s unstated implication was: “take responsibility or die!” In that state of consciousness I really believed it.

“YES! YES! I TAKE RESPONSIBILITY!”

The voice fell silent. After a while I got to my feet and stumbled back into the house. The rest of the trip was relatively uneventful . . . By late afternoon I’d dropped back into normal awareness again—I was very glad to be back.

That night I went to bed somewhat washed-out from the acid, but fully recovered and in consensus reality again. I’d been down for several hours, in fact.

I had a dream:

My machete was in front of me, hanging suspended in a pure void of infinite darkness. Etched on the blade were Hebrew letters in living fire. I am not Jewish, and I don’t know Hebrew, but I can recognize those letters and differentiate them from Sanskrit or Greek characters, for example. The machete disappeared and only the fiery letters remained suspended in the void: then they began to move and re-form themselves in the Roman alphabet to spell SEPHIROTH, in fire. Then they disappeared and only the void was left.

I awoke, my heart pounding anxiously. (Why was I afraid?) I got up and walked around the house—what did “sephiroth” mean?

I looked it up in Webster's Third New International Dictionary—no such word. This was the most powerful dream I've ever had—a once-in-a-lifetime kind of dream. (It was a bonafide dream and not an out of body experience, which is quite different.) It was easily as numinous as my encounter with the voice, but unfortunately I didn't know what it meant any more than I knew what it was that I'd taken responsibility for. It was to be at least two weeks before I got a clue . . .

. . . I was aimlessly browsing in a Santa Fe book store. I saw a book with a title like: Dictionary of Occult and Mystical Terms—something like that. Ah ha! Maybe here I can find out what "Sephiroth" means. I turned to the proper page: "Sephiroth: The ten emanations of God in the Jewish Kabbalah." I was stunned: I had heard of the Kabbalah, and knew it was some kind of Jewish mystical system, but that was as far as my knowledge went. How could my unconscious psyche come up with information that I had never consciously encountered in my life?

Needless to say, I obtained some books about the subject. I forget the reading sequence now, but Dion Fortune's The Mystical Qabalah and Gareth Knight's A Practical Guide to Qabalistic Symbolism stand out in my mind as particularly seminal texts . . . It was in Knight's book, over a year later, that I encountered the final synchronicity for this experience.

Without trying to explain the intricacies of kabbalistic philosophy, of which there are many (to say the least!), I discovered that my machete/voice adventure corresponded to the "17th path on the Tree of Life." This path is called: "A path of choice, the crossroads of life meet here." (e.g: "Do you take responsibility?") The Tarot arcanum symbolically connected with this path is The Lovers, and the Hebrew wordletter for The Lovers is "zayin," which means "Sword." (A machete is certainly a kind of sword). The drug ergot is also closely associated with this path, and LSD, of course, is an ergot derivative.

That's a fair amount of synchronicity compressed into an event which is still not totally clear to me, but I am apparently in good company: years after my "kabbalah trip" I found this

observation concerning LSD therapy in Stanislav Grof's book, Realms of the Human Unconscious. He is describing here how others under the influence of LSD have had experiences similar to my own:

Individuals unfamiliar with the Kabbalah have had experiences described in the Zohar and Sepher Yetzirah [two classical kabbalistic texts] and have demonstrated a surprising familiarity with kabbalistic symbols.

I want to emphasize that I am sharing my personal experiences of the Work with you—there are as many paths as there are humans on the planet, so I'm not claiming that the kabbalah is for everyone. Although it works for me, you might find it unacceptable. That's OK—such contradictions are superficial. That's because there is a primordial *gestalten* operating within the human unconscious. Hamer calls it "core shamanism"; Leibniz, Huxley and others called it the "Perennial Philosophy." Whatever you call it, it's the foundation of every legitimate spiritual tradition in the world. We get so caught up in our own experience that we usually do not realize that the forces driving our beliefs are pretty much universal—from Buddhism to Islam to Christianity and beyond, the core symbols have their roots in the same truth. That's why there are so many legitimate paths that seem so different from the outside. Don't be fooled—when followed with shamanic will and intent they all lead to the top of the mountain.

But don't be fooled again—fighting a war to defend your God is the biggest illusion going, as well as the shortest road to hell—not every inner voice has your best interests at heart. We live in a multidimensional multiverse of competing powers. Nevertheless, as human egos incarnated in three-dimensional space, we have one power that the gods, the demons, and the angels do not have: the power of choice. It is up to us to sort out what makes sense and then live out those choices in the world.

There are three rules of thumb that I would like to leave with you: The first is that any choice that does not lead to ultimate integration and unity leads to hell.

The second is that in making choices you must be ruthless in

the service of your truth. If the truth hurts, then for enlightenment's sake you must bear the pain. Any other option destroys the Work. You will constantly be offered choices that lead to superficial integrations that arc dead-end streets. Your essence will always tell you what to do—the secret lies in serving that advice. It's never easy to do; that's why they call it the Work.

Finally, drugs are not a substitute for doing the Work. Entheogen use outside of a disciplined, dedicated spiritual practice is recreational drug use. Re-creation, certainly, is essential to our well-being, but when it becomes escapist it insults the Work. Substance abuse of any kind is self-abuse. And although it can be extremely useful to take an occasional helicopter ride to the mountaintop (if nothing else you'll get a bird's-eye view of where you're going and where you've been), you won't be allowed to stay there—for that you'll have to hike the perilous path up from the bottom. Though I suppose it's possible, I've never heard of anyone who attained permanent enlightenment by using psychedelics.

A few words about “shamanism.” The shaman is a master of altered states of consciousness—in the classical definition, he or she travels to “other worlds” to heal the ills of the tribe. What other worlds, and how does one travel to them? Are we talking about out-of-body states here, or something else? These other worlds are literally dimensions of consciousness: they aren't “out there” someplace, they're “in here.” This is almost impossible for scientifically oriented Westerners to accept, but nevertheless it's true. One doesn't have to be a master of the classical out-of-body experience, like Robert Monroe, to travel to the shamanic realms. Anybody with a little focused intent can do it.

Jungian active imagination, kabbalistic path-working, and Hamer-method shamanic journeying are all separate names for the same basic technique: different symbols—same experience. That's why I have trouble with some of the New Age shamans I encounter—the ones who pretend to be “Native Americans.” First of all, “shamanism,” in the sense I define it, is not the exclusive province of tribal peoples, it's the legacy of all humankind. Second, anyone born on this land is a Native American, and the American earth shapes our beliefs; the European, African, or Asian ancestors can no longer claim our full allegiance. But neither are most of us Aboriginal Americans, and even if we were, time moves in only one direction; the days of living in tipis with the buffalo

are gone forever.

To adopt whole-cloth the mythology of aboriginal tribes is to unwittingly disrespect both them and ourselves. If I were a Sioux I would find it bitterly ironic that the newcomers who altered my ancestral homeland adopted our world-view only after its context had been destroyed. Happy myths don't sprout from reservation shacks, and past glories curse the present when we reject the challenges of our own day. Instead of ripping off Aboriginal American spirituality, it would be more useful for us to show our respect for its wisdom by becoming the true sons and daughters of this American earth. Not a nation of immigrants, but real native peoples.

That means we go inside of ourselves, into the shamanic realm, to find what is authentically our own, in this time and in this place, and bring it forth to live out in the world. If there is truth in the idea of reincarnation, then we are our ancestors both past and future. To honor “them,” we must honor ourselves in the present. Part of this involves making room for the emergence of new myths. (Egos can't create myths, but they can allow them to come forth.) As Neo-Native American myth-facilitators, we are obliged to take the best of the past and apply it to the reality of the present to create something worthy of respect in the future.

Within each of us is an essence or god-self seeking to express its myth. The goal of the Work is to create a context for our myth-making essence to manifest: we must become our essences. American myths (native, imported, and derived) are dying all around us—the people cry out for new myths to live by. Dare I say that as the ancestors of future generations we no longer have the leisure to ignore this obligation?

Letter From LSD-Inventor Albert Hofmann to Apple CEO Steve Jobs

This Is Your Country On Drugs:
The Secret History of Getting High in America, 2009.
http://www.buffingtonpost.com/ryan-grim/read-the-never-before-pub_b_227887.html#hoffmanjobsletter

Steve Jobs has never been shy about his use of psychedelics, famously calling his LSD experience “one of the two or three most important things I have done in my life.” So, toward the end of his life, LSD inventor Albert Hofmann decided to write to the iPhone creator to see if he’d be interested in putting some money where the tip of his tongue had been.

Hofmann penned a never-before-disclosed letter in 2007 to Jobs at the behest of his friend Rick Doblin, who runs an organization dedicated to studying the medical and psychiatric benefits of psychedelic drugs. Hofmann, a Swiss chemist, died in April 2008 at the age of 102.

Dear Mr. Steve Jobs,

Hello from Albert Hofmann. I understand from media accounts that you feel LSD helped you creatively in your development of Apple computers and your personal spiritual quest. I’m interested in learning more about how LSD was useful to you.

I’m writing now, shortly after my 101st birthday, to request that you support Swiss psychiatrist Dr. Peter Gasser’s proposed study of LSD-assisted psychotherapy in subjects with anxiety associated with life-threatening illness. This will become the first LSD-assisted psychotherapy study in over 35 years.

I hope you will help in the transformation of my problem child into a wonder child.

*Sincerely,
A. Hofmann*

* * * * *

Dear Rick,

Thank you for all you do for my problem child. I am pleased to add whatever I can do from my part.

I learned much from your great letter, to do things after waiting for the right moment, how clever and careful you organize and do your work.

I do hope that my letter to Steve Jobs corresponds to your expectation, especially what regards the choice of the writing paper. [Doblin had asked Hofmann to use his personal letterhead. It’s not what you’re thinking.] I believe that I followed your prescription.

Hopefully Dr. Gasser will be successful with his request.

*Cordially -
Albert*

Written just after his 101st birthday, the letter’s penmanship is impressive for a man of his years. I showed it to my grandmother, Ruth Grim, who was 8 years Hofmann’s junior and did amateur handwriting analysis as long as Hofmann had been tripping. Without knowing who he was, she said in an e-mail that “something happened early in his life that made him twisted about things. Maybe he felt threatened. Also—creative with his hands, hard on himself, thinks a lot, stubborn, careful with the way he expresses himself, not influenced by other’s thinking.”

Doblin says Hofmann often said he had a happy childhood and wouldn’t characterize him as twisted. Hofmann, for his own part, often referred to LSD as his own “problem child” and in his letter he asks Jobs to “help in the transformation of my problem child into a wonder child.”

He specifically asks Jobs to fund research being proposed by Swiss psychiatrist Peter Gasser and directs Jobs to Doblin’s Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies. Doblin and Hofmann were close; Doblin gave the doctor his first tab of ecstasy in the ‘80s when it was still legal, he says, and Hofmann loved it, saying that finally he’d found a drug he could enjoy with his wife, no fan of LSD.

Doblin provided a copy of the letter to me; Hofmann’s son, Andreas Hofmann, executor of his father’s estate, authorized its publication.

The letter led to a roughly 30-minute conversation between

Doblin and Jobs, says Doblin, but no contribution to the cause. “He was still thinking, ‘Let’s put it in the water supply and turn everybody on,’” recalls a disappointed Doblin, who says he still hasn’t given up hope that Jobs will come around and contribute.

That Jobs used LSD and values the contribution it made to his thinking is far from unusual in the world of computer technology. Psychedelic drugs have influenced some of America’s foremost computer scientists. The history of this connection is well documented in a number of books, the best probably being *What the Dormouse Said: How the 60s Counterculture Shaped the Personal Computer*, by New York Times technology reporter John Markoff.

Psychedelic drugs, Markoff argues, pushed the computer and Internet revolutions forward by showing folks that reality can be profoundly altered through unconventional, highly intuitive thinking. Douglas Engelbart is one example of a psychonaut who did just that: he helped invent the mouse. Apple’s Jobs has said that Microsoft’s Bill Gates would “be a broader guy if he had dropped acid once.” In a 1994 interview with *Playboy*, however, Gates coyly didn’t deny having dosed as a young man.

Thinking differently—or learning to *Think Different*, as a Jobs slogan has it—is a hallmark of the acid experience. “When I’m on LSD and hearing something that’s pure rhythm, it takes me to another world and into another brain state where I’ve stopped thinking and started knowing,” Kevin Herbert told *Wired* magazine at a symposium commemorating Hofmann’s one hundredth birthday. Herbert, an early employee of Cisco Systems who successfully banned drug testing of technologists at the company, reportedly “solved his toughest technical problems while tripping to drum solos by the Grateful Dead.”

“It must be changing something about the internal communication in my brain,” said Herbert. “Whatever my inner process is that lets me solve problems, it works differently, or maybe different parts of my brain are used.”

Burning Man, founded in 1986 by San Francisco techies, has always been an attempt to make a large number of people use different parts of their brains toward some nonspecific but ostensibly enlightening and communally beneficial end. The event was quickly moved to the desert of Nevada as it became too big for the city. Today, it’s more likely

to be attended by a software engineer than a dropped-out hippie. Larry Page and Sergey Brin, the founders of Google, are longtime Burners, and the influence of San Francisco and Seattle tech culture is everywhere in the camps and exhibits built for the eight-day festival. Its website suggests, in fluent acidese, that “[t]rying to explain what Burning Man is to someone who has never been to the event is a bit like trying to explain what a particular color looks like to someone who is blind.”

At the 2007 event, I set up my tent at Camp Shift—as in “Shift your consciousness”—next to four RVs rented by Alexander and Ann Shulgin and their septu- and octagenarian friends from northern California. The honored elders—the spiritual mothers and fathers of Burning Man—they spent the nights sitting on plastic chairs and giggling until sunrise. Near us, a guy I knew from the Eastern Shore—an elected county official, actually—had set up a nine-and-half-hole miniature golf course. Why nine and a half? “Because it’s Burning Man,” he explained. Our camp featured lectures on psychedelics and a “ride” called “Dance, Dance, Immolation.” Players would don a flame-retardant suit and try to dance to the flashing lights. Make a mistake, and you would be engulfed in flames. The first entry on the FAQ sign read: “Is this safe? A: Probably not.”

John Gilmore was the fifth employee at Sun Microsystems and registered the domain name Toad.com in 1987. A Burner and well-known psychonaut, he’s certainly one of the mind-blown rich. Today a civil-liberties activist, he’s perhaps best known for “Gilmore’s Law,” his observation that “[t]he Net interprets censorship as damage and routes around it.” He told me that most of his colleagues in the sixties and seventies used psychedelic drugs. “What psychedelics taught me is that life is not rational. IBM was a very rational company,” he said, explaining why the corporate behemoth was overtaken by upstarts such as Apple. Mark Pesce, the coinventor of virtual reality’s coding language, VRML, and a dedicated Burner, agreed that there’s some relationship between chemical mind expansion and advances in computer technology: “To a man and a woman, the people behind [virtual reality] were acidheads,” he said.

Gilmore doubts, however, that a strict cause-and-effect relationship between drugs and the Internet can be proved. The type of person who’s inspired by the possibility of creating new ways of storing

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Sincerely

A. Hofmann

and sharing knowledge, he said, is often the same kind interested in consciousness exploration. At a basic level, both endeavors are a search for something outside of everyday reality—but so are many creative and spiritual undertakings, many of them strictly drug-free. But it's true, Gilmore noted, that people do come to conclusions and experience revelations while tripping. Perhaps some of those revelations have turned up in programming code.

And perhaps in other scientific areas, too. According to Gilmore, the maverick surfer/chemist Kary Mullis, a well-known LSD enthusiast, told him that acid helped him develop the polymerase chain reaction, a crucial breakthrough for biochemistry. The advance won him the Nobel Prize in 1993. And according to reporter Alun Reese, Francis Crick, who discovered DNA along with James Watson, told friends that he first saw the double-helix structure while tripping on LSD.

It's no secret that Crick took acid; he also publicly advocated the legalization of marijuana. Reese, who reported the story for a British wire service after Crick's death, said that when he spoke with Crick about what he'd heard from the scientist's friends, he "listened with rapt, amused attention" and "gave no intimation of surprise. When I had finished, he said, 'Print a word of it and I'll sue.'"

Useful Cyberspatial Links for Further Research into Worlds of Psychedelia

The Lycaenum—Entheogenic Database & Community—<http://www.lycaenum.org>
The Psychedelic Library—<http://www.druglibrary.org/schaffer/lsd/lsdmenu.htm>
Island Web Guide to New Memes & the Counterculture—<http://www.island.org>
Burning Man 2009 in Black Rock City, Nevada—<http://www.burningman.com>
Rainbow Family of Living Light—<http://www.welcomehome.org>
The Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies—<http://www.maps.org>
DanceSafe—Promoting Health and Safety within the Rave and Nightclub
Community—<http://www.dancesafe.org>
High Times Magazine—<http://www.hightimes.com>
The Vaults of Erowid—<http://www.erowid.org>
YaHooka: The Guide to Marijuana on the Internet—<http://www.yahooka.com>
Hyperreal—Music, Chemistry, & Rave Culture—<http://www.hyperreal.org>
The Shroomery—<http://www.shroomery.org>
Bibliographia Studiorum Psychedelicorum: Explorations in the Psychedelic
Experience—<http://www.psymon.com/psychedelia>
The Deoxyribonucleic Hyperdimension—<http://www.deoxy.org>
Hippyland!—<http://www.hippy.com>
SpiritPlants Online Community—<http://www.spiritplants.org>
Lila: Transpersonal Database—<http://www.lila.info>
Marihemp: The Marijuana & Hemp Network—<http://www.marihemp.com>
fUSION Anomaly—<http://www.fusionanomaly.net>
NORML: The National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws —
<http://www.norml.org>
Drug Policy Alliance—<http://www.drugpolicy.org>
The Lazy Man's Guide to Enlightenment by Thaddeus Golas—[http://](http://freespace.virgin.net/sarah.peter.nelson/lazyman/lazyman.html#contents)
freespace.virgin.net/sarah.peter.nelson/lazyman/lazyman.html#contents
Hallucinogenic Plants by Richard Evans Shultes; Illustrated by Elmer W. Smith—
<http://www.zauberpilz.com/golden/g01-10.htm#contents>
Carlos Castaneda's Don Juan's Teachings—<http://www.prismagems.com/castaneda>
The Center for Cognitive Liberty & Ethics—<http://www.cognitiveliberty.org>
R6XX R6volutionary Xchange—<http://r6xx.com>
AlterNet DrugReporter—<http://www.alternet.org/drugreporter>
Reality Sandwich—<http://www.realitysandwich.com>
EarthRites—<http://www.earthrites.org>