

issue
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Tom
Robbins
Timothy
Leary
Michael
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Jello
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for a live recording session, backed by
members of Redd Kross and the Pri-
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V.A. Battle of the Garages, Vol. 4
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sirius' soapbox

When Timothy Leary emerged from prison in the mid-1970's, he made intelligence increase the central theme and the primary goal of his work. Author and friend Robert Anton Wilson suggested the term contelligence, a fusion of consciousness and intelligence, since the word intelligence primarily connoted linear quantitative information processing and comprehension. Such mental faculties as intuition, aesthetics, eroticism, wholeness and humanness, though popular to the 19th Century phrenologist, are rarely included in a 20th Century definition of intelligence.

It has been speculated (Julian Jaynes, et al.) that the pre-historic period of human evolution was guided by the oceanic undifferentiated intuitive aspect of human intelligence which we tend to refer to as consciousness, and that the linear cortical information processing aspect of human intelligence emerged only later in the service of individual survival and individuation. From individual ego-consciousness, separation from the cosmic web, we get monotheism; we get the struggle of "man" against nature; we get humanism, the concept (however poorly realized) of the value of individual life, the rights of "man" and the notion of progress. Recently Terence McKenna offered up some intriguing speculations. He suggested that individuation may have gone hand-in-hand with a retreat from or repudiation of psychedelic plant use by the early Greeks. They were changing from an orgiastic, Dionysian, non-differentiating form of intelligence in which the influx of sensory information was chaotic and uncontrollable. Cortical intellect, the reducing valve that enabled them to control their reality, also separated them from the web of creation. This initiated an I-thou separatist relationship with nature and a systematic struggle against death and disease where nature was seen as something to be fought and subdued. Contemplating this model, we can infer that the retreat from hallucinogens may have been a necessary evolutionary move at that point in time. It also explains the powerful taboo that has persisted in Western culture to this day against the hallucinogens. The fear is a fear of a return to prehistory, the loss of the romantic self. But this dialectical anxiety is resolvable by combining the mental faculties associated with intelligence and those qualities associated with consciousness—contelligence!

This issue of *High Frontiers* divides itself into "The Outer Technologies" and "The Inner Technologies." The picture that emerges is that of a new Teknos—humanistic, intuitive, synthetic—the perfect expression of contelligence. As Arthur C. Clarke has put it: "A sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic!"



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cover photo by Jim Lavrakas colored by Harry Rossit



NEWS ITEM:

"Ms. Rosalie Blue, a candy-store owner in Petaluma, California, is fighting to prevent her two children from being made wards of the court. Ms. Blue claims that she is God."

Intrigued by this article, I resolved that the next time I found myself in the vicinity of Petaluma, I would take along a tape recorder and look up Ms. Blue.

—Adam Cadmon

High Frontiers: Ms. Blue, what's it like to be God?

Rosalie Blue: There's no other way to be.

You mean you prefer it to being Rosalie Blue?

No.

I'm afraid I don't follow you.

Well, it's like Doonesbury suddenly getting up off the paper and seeing that he's always been flat.

So being God is going into another dimension?

Well, it means stepping outside the little house you've been decorating all your life and getting a glimpse of the Big City.

So, expanding your horizons...?

No, junking your imprint.

I see. Uh, how did you discover that you were God?

I didn't discover it, I set it up.

How...?

Of the various possibilities, that seemed the most inviting. So I began redecorating. Later I found out that this inviting feeling could develop into a real yearning... one of the most powerful tools you can acquire, tho' I must admit, a bit too earnest for my taste. Anyhow, I simply immersed myself in new models. Sorta like before you visit a new country you try to fill yourself with the language, maps, history, etc.

So you deceived yourself into thinking...

No more than I deceived myself into thinking that I'm Rosalie Blue.

But you didn't decide to be Rosalie Blue.

Precisely.

If you are indeed God, why is it that throughout history people have usually thought of you as masculine?

When you're knocking about the Mesopotamian desert and you catch a glimpse of the infinite, about the grand-

est picture you can come up with for it is your tribal chieftain.

Are you a feminist?

What the hell are you talking about? Does Jerry Falwell piss Diet Pepsi?

What do you think of the creationists?

They are an excellent illustration of the Darwinian principle of atavism.

But people who believe in The Bible, the word of God, come to quite different conclusions than you.

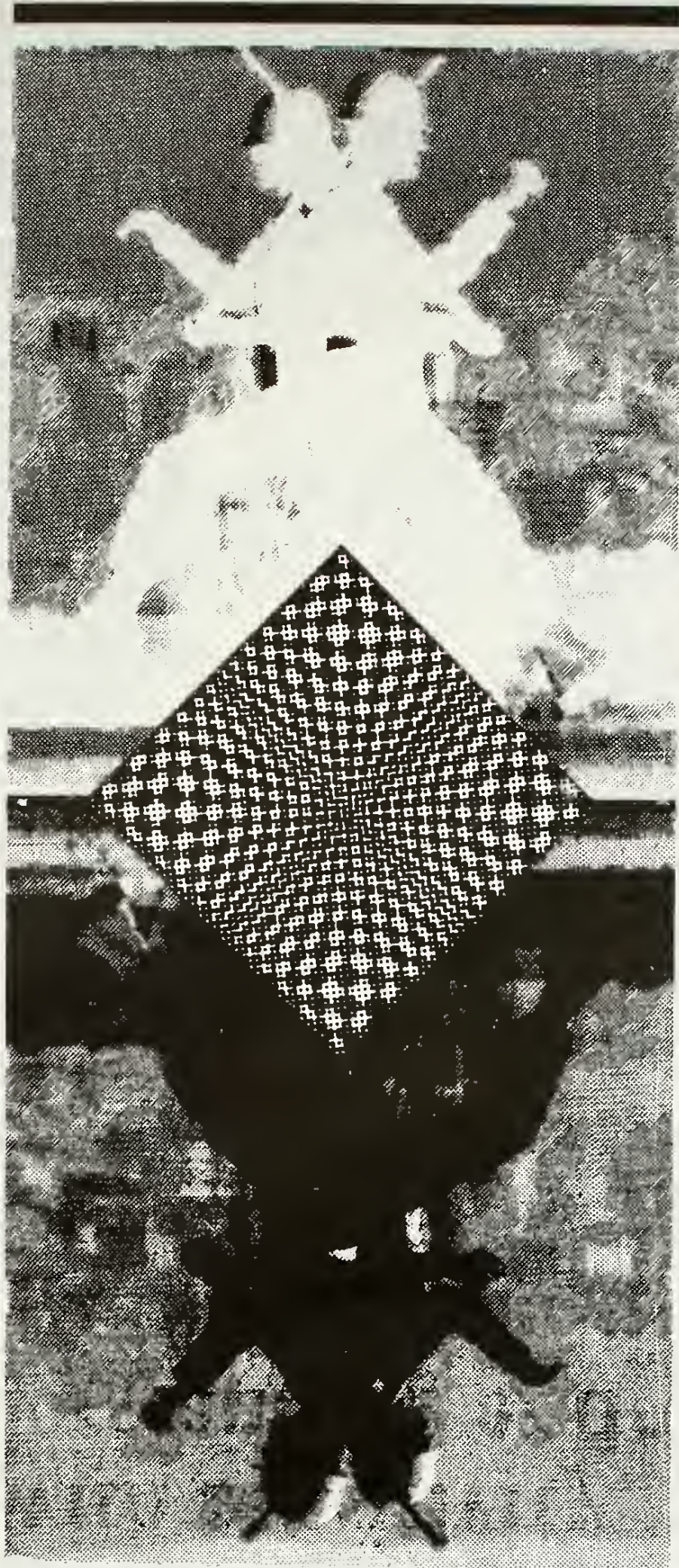
Sheer idolatry. That's what Moses smote the tablets for, confusing the image with what it represents. What's a meta for anyway?

Why do you think that the courts want to take your kids away?

They try to imagine how these kids were conceived and they can't handle it.

Well, I guess we've gone on about as far as we can this way. Is there any message you'd like to leave our readers?

Yes: **Nothing Matters.**



OUTER TECH- NOLO- GIES

High
Science,
Frontier
Technology,
and Politics
beyond Politics



What I'm doing now with computer hardware or psychoactive software has the same goal as everything I've done in the last 20-25 years; namely to encourage and empower individuals to think for themselves, to question authority. By question authority, I don't mean rebel or protest or struggle with authority, but just to insist on a dialogue with authority. Most authorities, of course, don't want to engage in dialogue with individuals so this inevitably leads to a direct encounter in which it is the duty of the individual to force authority into a dialogue. If you do this, though, you are putting yourself in a risky position. One thing about individuals attempting to question and debate authority... in order to do that, you have to be smart. That's where it comes back to helping people to think for themselves effectively, with power and clarity.

We are developing a new linguistic, with which anyone, regardless of your native dialect or your local jargon, anyone in the world, will be able to communicate with a person of another linguistic group using numbers. This will produce an equalization and a democratization and a linguistic global unity which will have profound effects... will profoundly stimulate human evolution and lift it to a higher level.

The computer has been bogarted, or co-opted, by industrialists and by the commercial society. So that when you think of a computer you think of a desk bristling with an enormous amount of high-tech, expensive and somewhat intimidating equipment. We're designing computers that would be the size of *Time* or *Newsweek* magazine, the front of which would be entirely a screen with no keyboard, but simply a 0-9 number access, and which you could fold and stick in your pocket, which would cost less than \$40, less than a pair of Nikes. These computers, or electronic thought processors, could be given to every kid in the ghetto, every poor kid, could be given to every third-world peasant, and that person, who probably would be illiterate, would be communicating at a very high level of comprehension and precision using numbers. So electronic thought processing is the ultimate political and cultural evolutionary tool for stimulating individual growth and personal development.

When we're using numbers instead of letters, we're doing exactly what Mendeleyev did with the elements. You could talk about water, and the Frenchman would say "eau," and the Italian would say "aqua," and the German says "wasser," and the Englishman says "water," and we don't know what we're talking about. I just write H₂O and everyone in the world knows that I'm talking about water, because it's reduced to the elements of hydrogen and oxygen. Well, the same thing can be done with any idea. It's been well known that language imprisons a culture. Language is the great shackle to the mind. You're limited, restricted, imprisoned by concepts that you use, by the words that you use. Once you start using numbers, you have fissioned the heavy molecules of human thoughts. You're reducing to the elements. Put the elements together and very quickly you get complexity, precision, accurate location as to place and time.

Suppose we talk different languages! I can't talk to you. The fact that we're creating a global linguistic does not mean that we are junking the mechanical language of the printing press; nor are we junking the tremendously precious, intimate private spoken language. So you whisper sweet nothings into the ear of those with whom you have that close intimacy, and you can write in the Phoenician alphabet print with those with whom you want to communicate that way, and reserve using numbers for those who don't know your own baby-talk language, who don't know how to read your printed words. We're talking here about close encounters of the fourth kind, which is intelligent interaction. In Spielberg's movie, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, there was contact, but almost no intelligent interaction.

An easy and effective way to help everyone

GET SMART!

Dr. Timothy Leary talks to High Frontiers



I know that many people who have shared the chemical mind experiences of the past may be surprised or even shocked when I suggest that electrons are the next evolutionary step in turning yourself on, booting up your brain, activating new circuits in your mind. I don't see how you can use psychedelic drugs and not want to talk in electrons. Anyone who's had profound LSD experiences knows that the brain operates in clusters of flash on/off's, the so-called vapor trails. The clarity of atomic vision you get when you're very high on LSD or peyote or psilocybin is a sheer tuning in to the way the brain actually operates... holograms of clusters of individual bleeps and on/off's. When you try to translate the full-blown LSD experience into printed words or even into lights, it's pathetic. You're just using the language of the machine, really, (that's what written words are, the language of the machine) to describe something which is post-industrial and post-mechanical... electronic information flow.

I'm supportive of the concept of designer drugs. It's a scandal that in 25 years, the government and the pharmaceutical industries have not improved the drugs. Granted, there are things wrong with every illegal drug. But within six months you could have improvements in marijuana so it can put you exactly where you want to be. There can be 20 different strains that will be suited

to exactly the brain level you want at that moment. We could have a euphoriant and an energizer like cocaine that doesn't have its side-effects. We could have a form of LSD that lasts a shorter time and is much more precise.

I think there'll be a big boom in editing your own home videos. You can tape 10 movies that you like and be your own home editor and get the essence of your ten movies into a 29-minute... I think a Japanese company probably will come out with an inexpensive home editor. That, of course, is another example of a technology which gives to the individual a power which in the past has been reserved for the networks and the film industry. The movie industry doesn't want you to be cutting up their 90-minute situation.

All the frontiers, genetics, life extension, quantum and post-quantum physics, neurology, demographics, sociology... it's all exploding pretty much as you would hope and expect. But the problem that I have with these grandiose perspectives, which are true and real, is that I'm intensely practical. While I'm thrilled by the notion of the new quantum physics, it's kind of abstract to me until I can see the software and see it on my own screen and do something about it. That's why I like home film editing. You can actually take ten of Hollywood's biggest movies and slice them up. You're a chemist. You're fissioning these enormous hundred million dollar



**So they
had to have
a new domestic
enemy and,
of course,
drugs are
the perfect
scapegoat.**

molecules and you're getting the elements that you want. It takes courage and it takes self-confidence to do that. You dare to take a part of Coppola, a part of Kubrick.

If you get out into the future, it is strictly a frontier of temporal geography, rather than spatial. You're out there ahead of anybody else. You have to rely on your own courage and your own sanity and your own version of reality.

The Reagan administration is an extraordinary recurrence, or flare-up, of the basic American disease, which is the Protestant ethic, the original Massachusetts Bay Puritan notion of predestinarianism. The idea that there are the elect and the damned. Naturally, white Protestants are the elect and everyone who's not a white Protestant Puritan is damned. Therefore they have no rights, can be offed, enslaved, can be treated basically as in the service of the Devil.

But I feel that 1988 will be the ending of the cycle. I think you can already sense the distaste which 8 years of Reagan is going to produce. Hopefully, in 1988, the post-war baby-boom generation, 76 million-plus strong, will exercise their voices for the first time politically. Now when that happens, you're going to see an enormous 1960's surge of hope, optimism, and scientific utopianism.

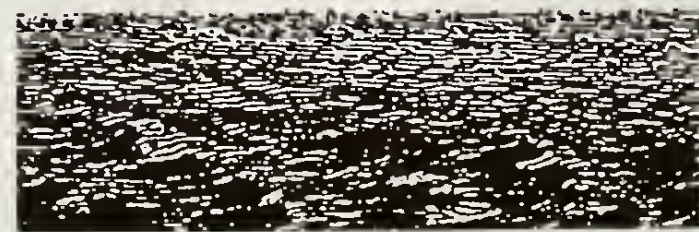
People like Reagan because he's got enthusiasm, energy, charisma. He smiles and feels good about himself. My god, if your president doesn't feel good about himself, if he's dragging his ass around like Mondale, what message is he sending to the herd or to the tribe. But I think everyone would agree that at the level of creativity, open-mindedness, tolerance — the basic intellectual virtues — Reagan is a 1 on a scale of 1 to 8.

I don't think that being illegal is going to stop people from taking XTC. America's going through a hysterical fanatic paroxysm of religious intolerance. These Protestant types truly believe they have to have an enemy to be against. First there was Hitler, then there was Japan, and then it was the Soviet Union. For the last twenty years we've been at war with Central America, Nicaragua, Cuba. We have to have colored people, or different language people, or different religions as scapegoats. These South Americans are obviously dirty sinful people because they don't sing Protestant hymns. So the American government has to have an outside enemy to whip up the military fervor, and it also has to have an internal domestic civil war going on at all times. So that we started with the Civil War 100 years ago, which was a total disaster; an unnecessary war, whipped up by this insane Protestant desire, "Onward Christian Soldiers,"

and then, just in the last century, the scapegoatings of Wobblies and trade union people, then the Jews have always been scapegoats of the Protestant ruling class, and then the Japanese for awhile during World War II. And then after World War II it became reds and communists and pinkos. If you were not a total right-wing republican, you were a communist. Because it's either/or. There's no shade. You're either a god or a devil.

So they had to have a new domestic enemy and, of course, drugs are the perfect scapegoat. People that use drugs are young and they tend to be dissident. They don't tend to be Born Again Christians. They tend to be everything that's sinful and horrible to a Protestant-ethic-predestinarian. So the war on drugs is a religious war, and in a religious war there's no pretense at honesty or clarity or tolerance—anything goes, propaganda, lies, persecution. That'll end, hopefully, by 1988.

Mind Mirror review — see page 23



More Biophysical

Fun for Your Mind

and Body

With their book *Life Extension* selling millions on the top 10 best seller list for several years, these intrepid self-provers of potential chemical and nutritional memory enhancers, intelligence increasers, muscle-builders, life extenders and who knows what else (we won't tell) offered to the world their personal radical interventionist approach to improving the quantity and quality of life.

As high profile media figures, they also present to the world a unique dyad—hurling controversial anti-authoritarian arguments (from a succinctly right-wing libertarian perspective) at government bureaucrats and new age puritans with equally barbed intensity. We met them, clothed in their matching black leather and studded jewelry heavy-metal attire, at the new age "Whole Life Expo" in San Francisco last year where they stood out like arabs at a Barmitzvah. We found them gregarious, funny and engaging and they apparently liked us, too, as they invited us to visit them at their secret hideaway in Southern California.

R. U. Sirius was joined by Ken Babel, author of *"Nutrition and Meganutrients for Recreational Drug Users"* in asking the questions. Also present were Tom Rettig (formerly Timmy on The Lassie Show) and Lord Nose.

SANDY SHAW: There are two types of foods that we've already identified that when eaten before regular meals cause people to eat less food.

DURK PEARSON: These are biochemical manipulations.

HIGH FRONTIERS: Are you talking about the grapefruit extract...

DP: That doesn't work. Ours works. We've had one person lose about 150 pounds in 8 months. Another guy lost 100 pounds in 6 months and lots of people have been losing weight easily. The big thing is there's no deprivation. If you can eat as much as you want any time you want, it takes the sting out of it. You can go pig out every night and still lose fat.

HF: You're talking about ornithine?

DP: There's a lot more to it than that. We can actually switch your body's metabolism to selectively burn fat and leave carbohydrates alone.

SS: Part of our hypothesis as to what controls body fat is that it's the ratio of insulin to growth hormone. So what we're doing is reducing the insulin levels while increasing the growth hormone levels so that you end up with less body fat.

DP: Your immune system is stimulated like hell as a result of using this technique.

HF: Do you think that might have an effect on the AIDS situation?

DP: I don't know if it could cure existing AIDS, but it would very substantially reduce your chances of getting it. Of course, that's just an opinion. It improves D cell and T cell functions, both quite dramatically. The thing to remember about AIDS is that it's very difficult to get. Two doctors that I know who have dealt with a lot of AIDS patients have said that every one of their patients without exception had very bad nutrition—extremely bad, junk food junkie types. Let's assume that until AIDS came along gays gave blood as often as non-gays. I think that's a reasonable assumption. If that's true, there should have been at least 50,000 cases of transfusion-caused AIDS to date. The total number is 128, including a couple of cases that are iffy. What this means is that if you get a whole unit of blood containing the AIDS virus, and are in normal health, you have a chance of about one in 500 of getting AIDS. Even if you get the virus, it's not easy to get actual immunal suppression. There were a bunch of children in Nigeria who had blood samples taken as part of a hospital inoculation program where they immunized them against various random tropical diseases. This was in '72 or '73. When tested with the AIDS test for antibodies, 60% of the children had antibodies to AIDS. And these children were 6 1/2 years of age on the average. They don't have a bunch of funny sexual practices involving 6 1/2 year-old children in Nigeria, so one has to reach two conclusions. The first conclusion is that you can get the virus and have antibodies to it without any sexual activity whatsoever. The second conclusion one reaches is that since that same 60% of the children in Nigeria do not wind up with AIDS, that it's very difficult to die of AIDS after exposure. In fact, it is nutritionally related. I think there's an awful lot of people running around scared to death because they reacted positively to the test, and all they really need to do is attempt to keep their immune system in good shape, and they probably don't have anything to worry about.

HF: What else can you tell us about the immune system?

DP: BHT is a very powerful immunal stimulant.

HF: In Japan and England they banned it from the food supply.

DP: It's banned by a bunch of idiots who don't study their literature. BHT can increase the incidence of cancer in experimental animals under very artificial conditions. It involves carcinogens that are of absolutely no importance to human beings. They're laboratory curiosities. When you take a look at what happens when

you give the animals the carcinogens that are important to humans...the two most important being ultraviolet light, which is the number one cause of human cancer, and the many polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons, you find that BHT is particularly effective in suppressing cancer for both of those causes. So what we have is a measurable increase of cancer incidence under an unrealistic dosage schedule with a carcinogen of absolutely no importance.

HF: I guess toxicity is a property of dose, too.

DP: It certainly is. The doses that are required for cancer suppression are much smaller than the doses that are going to cause liver damage.

HF: Is BHT fat-soluble?

DP: Yes, fat-soluble, but it's remarkable how fast it gets to your brain. You take a teaspoonful on an empty stomach (which is not the daily dose we'd recommend, it's considerably more) just to demonstrate the effect and you will experience a psychedelic effect within about 30 minutes. It's sort of like a downer psychedelic. Things get echoey, sounds get echoey, the visual field gets a bit crystalized. Your thinking is clear, however. You are a little disoriented. The point is it gets into the brain very fast.

In a bunch of old folks' homes in Europe, where they were working on a combination L-dopa/parladel on Parkinson's patients in their 70's and 80's, they found out it had a 100% aphrodisiac side-effect. What happened is the little old ladies and little old men started fucking like fiends.

SS: We had the opportunity of being involved in a case involving herpes infection of the brain. My mother had a herpes infection of the brain that started off as herpes one, and the molecules had migrated back through the ocular nerve and then ended up in the brain. She was in bad shape. She could hardly recognize anybody.

DP: She had a hard time remembering...

SS: Her doctor told us that she would be dead within a few weeks and that we should get our affairs in order. As soon as we heard about this, we got her on BHT. After two weeks on the BHT she felt much better. It's been about three years now since she had it, and she would've died. She has recovered from all the symptoms entirely except for a headache that she still has which came about during the infection. This obviously reflects a certain amount of damage.

DP: She was stupid enough that after a year and a half, she thought she was completely well, and she stopped taking it. Of course it came right back again, so she started taking the stuff again. The doctor, who had thought we were dangerous quacks before, called us up about three months later and said, "What did you do to her?" And I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "I know you did something to her because she's supposed to be dead. I've seen a lot of patients in that condition and no one of that age has lived six weeks, let alone three more months. She seems to be doing very well. What did you do?" So I gave him the procedure for how we had given her BHT. There are people for whom BHT doesn't provide control of herpes—we believe these people have very active livers. If you metabolize it too fast, you won't have adequate tissue levels. But it works for about 95% of the people, which isn't bad. Even people with fast livers can take care of lesions very rapidly. You get

some absolute alcohol, pour plenty of BHT in there so you have more than will dissolve...a whole pile of it left at the bottom after shaking it, and you simply daub it on a herpes lesion. The alcohol will make it burn, but the lesion will be gone the next day. You have a vastly higher concentration of BHT in that solution—perhaps 10,000 times as high—than you could ever safely have in your serum. Your liver would get wiped out at those concentrations. Probably everything would get wiped out. But topically, it's no problem.

SS: There's two things to know for people who might be thinking about selling this stuff. The FDA cannot regulate substances. If you just sell the material as a substance and don't make any claims for it, they can't do a thing. DMSO. They wanted to get that out of the stores, but they can't because people are selling it without making any claims, calling it a solvent, and the FDA can do nothing.

DP: When our book first came out, BHT was the anathema of the health movement. It symbolized everything wrong with modern living. Within two months after our book came out, most health food stores had it under the counter. You had to ask for it. They wouldn't display it. Then we stopped in one of the biggest drugstores in downtown LA and there was a huge sign, "Yes, we have BHT!" in the window. We knew we'd won.

The FDA controls the labeling, advertising and claims made for substances. If you say it's for curing herpes, they'll jump down your throat if they catch you at it. On the other hand, if you just sell BHT as a food anti-oxidant, or simply as a chemical, they can do nothing. We talked to one marketer of DMSO, a very responsible company. They know the difference between industrial grade stuff and pharmaceutical grade. In fact, they buy it in France from a pharmaceutical manufacturer. They have a roll-on container like Ban deodorant. Can the FDA complain about this so-called solvent in a roll-on container? He said that they never mentioned it was roll-on. He took out a bottle from under the counter and said, "this is our old label compared to our new one." I said, "I can't see any difference except that you removed the name of the company that made it." He said, "Yes. French Pharmaceutical Company contains the word 'pharmaceutical' in the name." What you can do though, legally, is buy American Chemical Society reagent grade. That does not imply any pharmaceutical use. And that's entirely adequate in its purity.

SS: The FDA treats cosmetics very differently than drugs because, even though you can have a drug in cosmetics, it's the FTC that really regulates the claims that you make about cosmetics. And with the FTC you can prove that you're right. You can present papers to prove that what you're doing is consistent with scientific guidelines. You can do that with the FTC. You can't do that with the FDA.

DP: The guiding line is whether you're dealing with something dead, like hair or fingernails or epidermis, or whether you're claiming an effect on the dermis. If you're claiming an effect on living tissue, it's a drug by definition.

HF: Are you looking at all at things which will extend the maximum life span?

DP: Well frankly, we aren't as concerned about that as average lifespan. If we were 90 years old, we'd be worried about the maximum lifespan. Very few people are going to make the maximum lifespan unless they clean up their act with respect to the rate of damage occurring before that time.

DP: There's a twelve thousand year old chaparral bush out near San Bernadino. It doesn't look old and bedraggled at all. It's not like a bristlecomb pine where it looks beat-up in three thousand years. This thing's twelve thousand years old and it looks like a nice young bush.

HF: What's the stuff in chaparral?

DP: MDGA. Looks rather like two BHT molecules back to back.

SS: MDGA is very expensive if you buy it as a chemical. But Tonelab now has something called Chaparral Extract.

HF: When it comes to recreational drug use, I think you've got to zoom in on blood sugar level in the parameters...

DP: Yeah, especially noradrenalin depletion. Any of the stimulants cause massive depletions in noradrenalin, whether its amphetamines or cocaine or any of that stuff. And also people who use poppers, they've got a separate problem. They've got a problem with nitrosamines, and there does seem to be a correlation between popper use and Kaposi Sarcoma. The moral of that story is, if you're going to use poppers, you'd better do some vitamin C a couple of hours before you do them. Because the ascorbal radical will track the nitrosyl radical before they act with the free amine to form a nitrosamine. It's a very efficient tracking reaction.

Although you can do mischief to the adrenal by taking recreational drugs, the big problem has to do with the brain. Cocaine and amphetamines cause you to release a lot of noradrenalin but it blocks the re-uptake, and as a result you destroy it rather than recycle it. And this is why you very rapidly develop a tolerance to stimulants like cocaine and amphetamines and have to use more and more to get the same effect. Even in days, this happens.

SS: This is true for a lot of weight loss aids, too, like phenylpropanolamine. You get tolerant to the effect after a couple of weeks or so and you have to take more if you want to continue to use it.

DP: Then what happens is you get to the point where you're really poisoning yourself with the stuff but you still aren't able to release a normal amount of noradrenalin. You've just depleted yourself all to hell. And at that point you're in trouble. You go off and you crash. This has very severe effects on the immune system because you can suppress the release of growth hormone that way. Real bad for the immune system...

Another problem with stimulants, particularly with amphetamines, is that they seem to cause auto-oxidated damage. Perhaps they initiate the production of 6-hydroxy-dopamine and you get free radical damage. It has been found that methedrine damage to the brain in experimental animals can be reduced substantially by giving them high doses of vitamin C.

HF: What about LSD and noradrenalin?

DP: LSD will deplete the noradrenalin, which is one of the reasons you develop a tolerance to it. But very few people are going to take LSD every day. When it stops working, they'll stop taking it.

SS: Psilocybin seems to have anti-serotonin allergic effect. So that you should replace the serotonin by taking tryptophan.

DP: The brujos down in Central America and Mexico say you can take psilocybin mushrooms once a week and it's okay, but if you take them every day you'll age prematurely. And they're absolutely right, because their diet is almost entirely corn, which is relatively low in tryptophan. Psilocybin is a serotonin-anti-metabolist. That is, it blocks the effect of the serotonin. What this means is that if people are on a marginal amount of tryptophan in their diet and take too much psilocybin, they can effectively induce a serotonin deficiency. Serotonin is what releases your growth hormone at night and unless you're taking growth-releasers, or are under 30 and exercise heavily, or you're at puberty, regardless of whether you exercise, you're not going to have much growth hormone.

SS: Not only that, having low levels of serotonin in the brain leads to a behavioral effect that has been studied extensively now. It causes people to be more likely to flip out and do impulsive, violent type actions, either against themselves, committing suicide, or attacking other people. Flipping out in a car. Getting into a fight.

DP: So if you're going to take magic mushrooms, the moral of that story is, take a couple of grams of tryptophan before you go to sleep and that'll not only help you get to sleep, you'll be mellow the next day, when if you hadn't taken it, you might be a little edgy.

HF: What would you say to people who are taking tryptophan routinely?

DP: We take a couple of grams every night. I don't think it's causing premature aging in us. What it does cause is for the developmental clock to progress.

HF: We were talking before about noradrenal depletion. When we were talking to Leary the other day he was complaining that the drug industry has been lax and hasn't invented something like cocaine that can give you the euphoria and the aphrodisiac effects without the negative effects.

DP: They haven't been lax. They've been discouraged by the FDA. Because, you see, there is no category for recreational drugs in the FDA.

SS: Yes there is. Category One!

DP: That's it! Category One. That's the category for recreational drugs. Automatic Category One.

HF: I was wondering if vasopressin might be something that would be similar to cocaine without the negative effects.

DP: I don't think vasopressin produces a gross enough kick for most people to recognize anything. In most cases you have to use a double blind placebo study for a person to realize that it's done anything to their memory, even though it can be quite dramatic.

We saw a videotape of a college professor of psychology who'd been given PRL-853. It's a terrific memory enhancer. Normally you can memorize about 7 or 8 digits just by looking at them for a second. PRL-853 gives the average person a memory span of around 21 to 22 digits. Think about this.

HF: Where's this available?

DP: It isn't.

SS: This guy, this professor, he had been given the PRL-853 and he was asked whether he had gotten the drug or the placebo. He said, "No. I'm sure I got the placebo. Nothing happened to my memory." Here you have an 80% improvement in his memory and he hadn't noticed a thing.

DP: When they handed him the test results, his eyes bugged out and his jaw dropped. Perfect. Sometimes when you have an amnesia victim, the results are spectacular. A nurse who worked for a doctor we know had lost about 6 months out of her memory in a very severe auto accident. She was given PRL-853. A few seconds later she said there was a fog lifting from her mind—"I can remember things." With that one dose, she remembered everything. Now this is a better response than usual. Usually you have to continue using it for awhile to bring the memory back.

HF: Would that be effective for people who smoke pot?

DP: Oh, yes. One of the effects of the pot that they report on, is that it suppresses the release of vasopressin. So does alcohol. That's one of the very big reasons why it discoordinates you and screws up your reaction time, causes you to lose your memory. If you take alcohol with vasopressin you get a remarkably different high. You aren't drunk. You're high. You're euphoric, but your memory is almost unimpaired. You are considerably less impaired in visual spatial capabilities, coordination, and reaction time.

SS: The only way to get a memory drug approved by the FDA is to find another use for it. Such as, for example, with Diapid. It's prescribed for people who have diabetes insipidus.

DP: There are no more than 10,000 people in the United States with that condition.

SS: It's a deficiency of vasopressin.

HF: They can't prescribe that stuff for people with amnesia?

DP: No, because there's not enough of them to make it worthwhile to get the thing approved.



SS: But getting something like PRL-853 approved—it would have to be found effective against some disease and approved for that.

DP: If it cured cystic acne, you could get it approved. Never mind that it doubles or triples memory performance in most people. That's not good enough.

HF: How can we nutritionally enhance vasopressin performance in the body?

DP: It's very interesting. Noradrenalin can cause the release of it. I might add that LSD is an exceedingly powerful releaser of vasopressin. I believe it's the most powerful releaser known.

SS: One way you might increase vasopressin release is associated with theta wave activity. So that if you got a feedback device whereby you increase your theta wave activity, you would, in the process, increase your vasopressin activity.

DP: There used to be a company in Berkeley called Extended Digital Concepts that would sell you a kit for \$60, a little box you could build that was a biofeedback machine for EEG. It is better than any professional machine I've seen for under \$1000. The plans are in Popular Electronics from maybe 15 years ago or something. It had the alpha, beta and theta positions. I tell you, I put the thing on in the theta position and I wasn't expecting much to happen. I ended up with pictures in my head flashing one after another at the rate of a few per second. It was incredible. I got hallucinations sitting there with my eyes closed.

SS: That sounds like vasopressin release all right.

SS: There's a drug that has been developed (unfortunately, I can't mention its name because of the fact that it hasn't been approved by the FDA) which is incredibly effective against Parkinson's Disease. In the patients it's been tried on, it's reversed a lot of the damage the people have suffered. But it has one big problem. It has 100% aphrodisiac side effects.

DP: An investigator and some of his graduate students all took their tab at the start of the class and for the next hour they all had raging hard-ons. The dose is only about 15 micrograms a day, too. It should theoretically be cheaper to produce than Parladel. The structure is simpler. But the chances of it being approved are very small. The biggest problem they've had with the FDA is persuading them that aphrodisiac side-effects were less dangerous than all these people totally getting wiped out and getting put in old folks' homes with Parkinson's.

HF: Does it work for sexual dysfunction?

DP: Oh, yes. But I do not know of any drug which has been approved for that purpose.

SS: In the April 11, 1985 New England Journal of

Medicine there is an advertisement by a legitimate ethnopharmaceutical company which tells doctors that Yohimbe is an aphrodisiac and could be used in treating sexual dysfunction.

HF: How do they get away with that?

DP: Unknown. I suppose it's the time-honored method of doing it until the FDA says you've got to stop or we're going to put you in jail. It's not on the dangerous drug list. I can order it from a chemical supply house, but I must add that I didn't find it a good aphrodisiac.

SS: Apparently, it's only an aphrodisiac for males.

DP: On the other hand, an L-dopa/parladel combination works on females as well as males. What happens is, it stimulates the dopamine track in the brain. In a bunch of old folks' homes in Europe, where they were working on a combination L-dopa/parladel on Parkinson's patients in their 70's and 80's, they found out it had a 100% aphrodisiac side-effect. What happened is the little old ladies and little old men started fucking like fiends. The ladies figure, "I haven't had a period in 30 years, I don't have anything to worry about." Half of them got pregnant. Fortunately, all of them had abortions because the delivery would've killed them, and I would guess the chances of birth defects would be somewhere up near 100%. The point is, it got them all horny. Not only did it do that, it reset the reproductive clock, which is very much part of the aging clock. It went to premenopause in half the women.

We reset the reproductive clock in a mare that was destined for the glue factory. She'd been sterile for about 2 years and was about to be shipped out. We reset her clock and got a very nice colt as a result of that. First service, too. It normally requires 2 or 3 services to get a mare pregnant.

HF: Did this increase the old folks' life span, too?

DP: It doesn't restore damage to the dopamine receptors or the dopamine nerves. It simply provides more stimulation for the remaining structures and as such, is nowhere near a complete correction for the underlying pathology.

SS: What looks like the sort of treatment coming in a few years is the use of fetal brain tissue, implanting into animal brains where they've been damaged. If you implant the fetal tissue into the brain, you can repair quite a bit and recover a lot of function.

DP: There's due to be a lot of problems with applying that technique to humans because of federal laws against using aborted fetuses in experimentation.

SS: It's more liberal in other countries like Denmark where they can do fetal research. Probably the eventual use of fetal brain tissue will come from some foreign country, rather than the United States.

DP: The biggest dose I ever heard of with LSD was 12 milligrams, and that was real Sandoz LSD, a real experiment when you could still do experiments blatantly. He went away. But he came back with no detectable chromosome breakage.

SS: A study was done on Timothy Leary's blood to see if there was any increase in chromosome breakage. In fact, he had perfectly normal chromosomes, which is incredible considering how much he smokes, because cigarette smoking increases chromosome breakage.

HF: What do you know about co-enzyme Q?

DP: Co-enzyme Q is used by a lot of people. It's got an unshielded radical. So I would suggest it's only used in conjunction with other anti-oxidants.

HF: Do you think it's an effective longevity agent?

DP: In conjunction with other anti-oxidants it looks interesting.

SS: It effects mitochondrial energy output so it may also be of use to athletes, or people who want to lose weight and increase the metabolic activity of their cells.





On The Frontier

illustration by Gili unLTD.

Cut Here and Evolve

Long considered a stepchild in the cytobiology family, in the shadow of the more sexy and glamorous DNA, recent discoveries in the behavior of RNA and its chemical precursors lend some credence to the view that the first replicating molecule was RNA, with DNA coming only later on.

Research into the catalytic properties of RNA precursors shows that many of them have the ability to "self-splice," that is, to excise internal nucleotide chains, connect the loose ends, and release the excised portion, or "intron," in the shape of a loop or lariat. These introns can then act as templates, enabling them to operate on nearby RNA molecules, lengthening or shortening sequences.

This can, somewhat surprisingly, all be done in the complete absence of protein enzymes. This means that early RNA molecules didn't necessarily need the pre-existence of protein (nor, therefore, of DNA) to replicate and evolve. Since RNA is a rather simpler molecule, one might speculate that RNA appeared first, and that DNA derived from a reaction involving pre-existing RNA. However, since we all know that such speculation is unbecoming a true scientist, it behooves us to stop here.

Rockin' Rollin' Rocks

A report presented at the December meeting of the American Geophysical Union contained persuasive evidence that one of the important aspects of the current model of the Earth's structure may be in trouble.

It has long been presumed that the upper mantle of the Earth (that layer just under the crust) slides atop the lower mantle without ever mixing with it, like a laminate, and that the rock in the lower mantle is essentially unchanged since the Earth formed. This view has been reinforced by the observed sharp increase in density at 650 km, and by the fact that earthquakes have never been measured below that depth.

The report's data, based on measurements of the travel time of seismic waves, indicates that earthquake activity is not a reliable indicator of the depth of a subducting crustal slab, and that many slabs descend to depths of 1000 km or more, deep into the lower mantle. This shows significant mixing of crust and upper mantle rock into the lower mantle, leading away from a stratified model of the Earth's internal structure towards one in which convection occurs almost from the crust to the core. Research into the nature of that 650 km boundary, and the differences in the rocks on either side, hopes to determine how far in that direction geology needs to go.

Faster Than a Speeding Photon

The Hidden Variabilists seem to refuse to give up.

Alain Aspect's experiments at the University of Paris verified Bell's Theorem (HF #2) and, many thought, established that the Bell correlation was immediate and unmitigated. However, Jean-Pierre Vigiér of the Henri Poincaré Institute plans an experiment to test the existence of the "Bohm Potential," he announced at January's New York Academy of Sciences meeting. The Bohm Potential is a theoretical super-

luminal, but not instantaneous (the Bohm Potential propagates at about seven times the speed of light), carrier of quantum information.

In a variation of the famous double-slit experiment, neutron beams interfere even if only one neutron is in the apparatus at a time. Vigiér hopes to determine which, if either, path the neutron takes by wrapping an electromagnetic field around the path. The measurement of a deterministic path would be a step back towards reductionism and away from holism in quantum physics.

But the Picture is so Small!

Demonstrating once again that what goes around comes around, researchers at the Naval Research Laboratory and the Los Alamos National Laboratory are heralding the return of the vacuum tube to the modern world of electronics.

As electronic miniaturization proceeded in the 50's and 60's, vacuum tubes were replaced by smaller, cooler-operating, cheaper transistor integrated circuits. Pretty soon the only vacuum tubes around were cathode ray tubes used in televisions and computer terminals, and certain special application tubes (such as high-power radio and TV transmitters).

It wasn't all roses, however. Transistors are sensitive to high temperatures and, as "solid-state" devices, have limits on electron transit time due to collisions within the semiconductor material. Ironically enough, it is now the issue of transit time that is encouraging vacuum tube research, for these new tubes are on the order of one micrometer in diameter, comparable to device sizes in modern integrated circuits. Since the electrons in a vacuum tube have nothing to bump into to slow them down, tenfold improvements in transit time are theoretically possible. This would make vacuum tube integrated circuits useful in high-speed switching applications. In addition, vacuum tubes *like* high-temperature, high-voltage environments, and are less susceptible to radiation damage.

Practical application is a bit down the road, but VTICs may be useful in rocket and jet engine control, geothermal energy production and, of course, nuclear and military technologies.

We Don't Have Buckminster Fuller to Kick Around Anymore, so...

The hottest thing in chemistry these days is a molecule of carbon containing no fewer than sixty atoms in a stable structure. This new form of carbon was discovered at Rice University during experiments designed to study the interstellar formation of complex carbon chains (some speculate that interstellar carbon chains are among the earliest manifestations that led to planetary life).

Carbon atoms have a tendency to combine in highly symmetrical ways. The simplest organic molecule, methane, is a carbon atom surrounded by four hydrogen atoms arranged as the axes of a tetrahedron. Benzene is a hexagon. The hardness of diamond is due to the interlocking tetrahedra of its crystalline structure; the slipperiness of graphite is due to the flatness of its

hexagonal, chicken-wire crystals. According to the best current hypothesis, carbon-60 is shaped as an interlocking, completely symmetrical, spherical surface made up of twelve pentagons and twenty hexagons and looks for all the world like a soccer ball or geodesic sphere. Proposed names, reasonably enough, include "soccerene," "buckminsterfullerene," and "buckyball." As each vertex is a carbon atom with one double bond and two single bonds connecting it to other carbons, the molecule is chemically stable and relatively inert.

The idea that molecules could be shaped this way has inspired some truly innovative thinking. For example, the C-60 molecule is hollow, with nothing (i.e., a true vacuum) inside. This inside space is 7 Angstroms across (an Angstrom is one ten-billionth of a meter), large enough to contain other atoms, or even small molecules (the Rice group found C-60 atoms surrounding atoms of Lanthanum). Experiments are under way which put various things inside a buckyball and examine the behavior of the result. Buckyballs may be a way of transporting and handling substances that are too dense or otherwise difficult to handle conventionally.

Another line of thought proposes examining and attempting to create similar carbon clusters with, for example, 40 or 80 or 120 carbon atoms. An entirely new field of chemistry may be arising here, as chemists manipulate various buckyballs like crosses between Tinkertoys and Rubik's cubes and come up with forms which are not quite crystals; but more than just carbon chains, and which no one has ever encountered.

That'll Be Two Pints To Go, Please

A major steppingstone in the area of blood disease and its treatment, as well as in the area of biological process synthesis, was attained by researchers at the University of California at San Francisco. Measuring half a micron across, and consisting of hemoglobin contained in bubbles of fat, the UCSF team has successfully constructed artificial human red blood cells, called neo-hemocytes.

Hemoglobin was taken from outdated donor blood and encapsulated in double-layer lipid membranes (lipids are complex molecules made from fatty acids, and are the major ingredients in cell membranes).

Neo-hemocytes have no blood group antigens, so there is no blood-type problem, and they have a "shelf life" of six months. Since it is synthetic, contamination of artificial blood by hepatitis or AIDS is virtually impossible. Immediate applications include interim transfusions, trauma treatment, local oxygenation of clot and tumor areas, and tissue irrigation during surgery.

The next immediate steps are an industrial scale process and human clinical trials. Meanwhile, co-researcher C. Anthony Hunt was quoted in *Science News* that neo-hemocytes represent "one step along the road of constructing biological systems from scratch."

Jeff Mark





NEEDLE IN THE MIN

The following is excerpted from an interview printed originally by *ReSearch Magazine* in their third issue. *ReSearch* is a publication which should be of interest to all *High Frontiers* readers and can be contacted at 1529 Grant St., San Francisco, CA 94113. The interviewee is identified in the original piece as "an anonymous unit in corporate America."

ANONYMOUS UNIT: The human brain is more or less 50,000 years out of date — it evolved in a non-technological world where the basic tasks were hunting, gathering, agriculture, etc. and it was suited to that environment. But the increasing requirements of the Industrial Age are finally taxing its resources — it's getting overheated by the increasing information processing requirements being put on it. The brain's not throwing spears or digging roots anymore, it's just taking data in (through writing, voice and visuals) and emitting data through writing and voice. More than half of the American work force is engaged in white-collar information processing and the proportion is growing all the time.

How can we rebuild the brain so it's capable of adjusting to these new requirements? How can we build a brain for the cybernetic age? We're going crazy right now because we're trying to deal with tasks that we weren't really built for. From this point of view, we're kind of blank slates that can be printed with whatever kinds of neurocircuits we need in order to keep up.

There are ways to change the brain's functioning — psychosurgery, psychopharmaceuticals. We're dealing with electrical stimulation of the brain, and all the different uses that can be put to. What goes on is — you drill a hole in the skull, insert the electrode into whatever part of the brain you want, and then you can either fix the connecting plug directly over it, or loop it under the skin to another place. Once that's done, you can repeat it — some humans have been implanted with up to a hundred, in various deep brain structures. Depending on where you put this electrode, you get different effects.

AU: The pleasure center of the brain was discovered in 1956 by a brain scientist, James Olds, who discovered that when a rat was implanted there and given a pedal with which it could stimulate itself, it would do it at rates up to 5000 times an hour — the rat would just sit there doing practically a spastic reaction on this pedal, it got off on the electricity so much.

The sections of the brain that are responsive to electrical stimulation in terms of producing joy are also those parts of the brain that respond chemically when you shoot up with heroin: the joy circuit. Other patients have been implanted into other areas that make them super-aggressive.

MONTE CAZZAZA: The Army's researching that. I read that they're trying to develop a battle helmet that will turn you into a monster!

AU: That's it — a lot of this research is actually funded by the military in one way or another.

ReSearch: What about the side effects of implants?

AU: These implants can be left in for years without any real damage. They can be implanted completely under the skin — put the receiver on top of the skull and suture up the skin over it, then let it heal so there's no break in the skin, no route for infection.

They've mapped out areas they call type 1, type 2, and type 3. Type 1 is just mild joy, relaxation. Type 2 is a little more intense, and type 3 is just orgasmic rushes, etc. So, they're mechanizing that.

In one experiment in 1968, a patient had each one tuned to a different receptive frequency. So, by beaming radio energy at this implant, this person could "see" different pictures... by stimulating certain electrodes in the right patterns and combinations, this guy could "see" letters and patterns. Eventually they hope this can allow blind people to experience vision.

Another recent implant by Dr. Dabelle (University of Utah) featured 64 electrodes, with a connecting plug which emerges more or less right above his ear. The subject just lifts his hair up (like a flap).

Anyway, this guy with the flap got hooked up to a computer which automatically stimulated him with sentences. He was blind and he knew how to read braille. This guy got so he could read about 8 times faster than he could read braille with his fingers.

They also hooked up a camera in direct link so that the camera image was being fed to the brain directly. They put this guy in a room, gave him control of the camera — he could make out the difference between horizontal and vertical lines. That's about it, but it's a crude beginning.

MC: With miniaturization they could just implant cameras in the eyes...

AU: They're working on that now — building cameras small enough to fit into the ocular cavity — hooking up the muscles themselves to the camera. This opens up whole new worlds of perceptual experience because we have cameras sensitive to regions of the electromagnetic spectrum that our natural eyes aren't — infrared or ultraviolet, for example.

MC: With cameras they're developing now you could actually have better eyesight.

AU: When you have emotions, the heat on your body changes, so if you were to shift your perception to gamma rays, you could literally *see* emotions. All that's really holding us back is the *will* to go in there and *do* the technology. You could hook up your eyeball to telescopes, microscopes. Not only that, you could do the same types of things with all your senses. You could hear high noises like a dog, just by incorporating that circuitry into your temporal lobe. You could feel minute differences in a mirror. You could actually weigh things like an ocean tanker, etc. — scale all that information down to the range of normal human perception.

D'S EYE

AU: Now that we know about technologies to increase the amount and variety of data input, we can work on the other side of the coin — discovering new ways to get it out. Recent experimentation would indicate that the motor cortex might be tapped for output data. The motor homunculus is just forward of the sensory part of the brain. There's a large part of the motor area that's devoted to the hand and to the mouth, which makes sense, because that's where most of our output is going.

On this motor homunculus it's possible to record and discover a 'spike' (electrical peak registered on an oscilloscope — would be like a beep if you hear it) when a person moves a particular part of his body. If you were to record from the elbow region and have somebody flex their elbow, there'll be a little spike there — it's those cells that trigger the impulses that go down the spinal cord to the limb itself...

Knowing that possibility, Michael D. Craggs (in England) implanted a large matrix of electrodes on the motor cortex of a baboon. He trained this baboon to press a lever with his hand and also to make movements with his ankle and do all sorts of things like that — just general, but well-defined, body movements. They could, very accurately, record signals from the brain that could tell them what movement was being performed. It might be possible to completely cover that part of the brain with a very dense array of these electrodes, and thus do away with movement entirely. You could actually generate these impulses in that part of your brain without having to carry out the movement itself. You could be controlling mechanisms at a distance with much greater effectiveness than you can do now. The human body is just not designed for doing things like typing on computer keyboards or driving trucks. There's so much output bandwidth that's wasted in those tasks... because we just haven't evolved our programming in that type of an environment.

MC: Also, the reaction times that we need are a lot faster than can be actually generated.

AU: We need to be speeded up, basically. The brain works by the interference of wave patterns — you stimulate any one part of the brain and the waves spread like ripples on a pond to other parts. It's wave interference that makes it. Soon we'll be able to deal with those waves, change the way they move, guide them with our *own* electrical impulses, so that we can deal with a digital world. Right now I think people would go crazy if they had to stay in the Information World for as long as the cyberstate would have them there...

We may start to see ourselves the way we presently look at machines... "Here's a machine with this much processing capability, it's effective for these types of situations. It was invented in 1950 and maybe now it has to be reprogrammed or changed in some way to keep up with the change in tasks." These technologies are going to allow vast changes in the way we relate to each other, because we'll evolve new multi-sensory languages. We can access each sensory modality independently. So, in-

stead of saying the word "green," you can transmit the actual color green. And if you have in mind a green car, you can transmit a picture of a green car... and the same for all other sensory modalities. Instead of just having linguistic/auditory words (signals) that are supposed to recall these other sensations but really don't all that well, you'll be able to communicate in a multi-sensory artistic form. Any type of art form can be made all-enveloping, because once you've tapped into every single input that's coming into the brain from reality, then, more or less, reality itself can be controlled. And you can program interactive fantasies and high-quality 3-D computer simulations and multi-sensory modality inputs to the point where the dividing line between fantasy and reality would fade away. There would be no way to tell whether your experience was genuine or just a high quality interactive simulation: "Is this a real room?" And you could go around and kick the walls, make yourself a cup of coffee, etc... and the computer would gather your motor functions, generate the required sensory difference and program back in such a high-quality simulation that you wouldn't necessarily know whether what you were dealing with was simulation or reality.

AU: The brain is a biological information processor, composed of about 100 billion neurons. It's an amazingly complex net because each neuron can connect to about 20,000 others or more, receiving inputs from 10,000 and giving outputs to 10,000 others, on the average. It's really incredible how tangled this web is. Nevertheless, it works on the easily understandable principle of signals coming into a neuron from all those 10,000 sources — the neuron having its threshold element which says, "If so many signals come in per unit time, FIRE!" And at the same time, as we're learning all this about the brain, our electronics revolution is making things smaller and smaller, asymptotically moving to zero, so that the number of computer components we can fit on a given chip or in a given volume in a computer is increasing exponentially. Following that curve to a possible extension, might it eventually be possible to put the human brain, put the circuit diagram that generates our consciousness, onto a silicon chip into a computer? People who don't really understand the equivalence of biological-information-processing and inorganic-information-processing say, "Computers can't think." But that's all a brain is — basic electrical components strung together in very complex networks. Somehow this massive superhighway interchange of data generates our subjective experience of "consciousness."

AU: We've been developing social forms which allow many small brains to interact in a structured way so as to accomplish tasks that no single brain could — larger and larger civilizations, etc. All this allows us to synergize our brains to accomplish bizarre things. Two possible

Another possibility would be to link together a large number of brains through multi-sensory communication.

avenues to continue that trend: 1) We could genetically engineer larger and larger brains. Right now, the brain stops growing at a certain age; the brain has all its neurons at birth. But we could change that genetic code so that the brain continues to expand, though you'd have to fiddle around quite a lot so all the circuitry was still in phase, etc. 2) Another possibility would be to link together a large number of brains through multi-sensory communication: extending data back and forth so fast the transmission of information from brain to brain makes it hard to tell where you begin and another person leaves off. Well, all of this is being explored. I think flexibility is the key and the tabula rasa and all that. Nobody should force anybody else to follow in any particular way.

AU: I think right now there's a secret program dealing with this brain stuff, both in the Soviet Union and in America (SRI and all those guys). They're ten times ahead of what I could show you now. You're into organization control processes, systems theories? That's ultimately it — figure out how to break something down. You've heard of *Living Systems* (by James Miller). That's a hierarchical breakdown of living systems from one cell to the nation. There are certain functions of each level that the system has to be able to perform for itself. Now, hierarchic homeostatic maintenance is basically what control is — the basis of control is homeostasis, and expansion when you have the time...

In *The Scientist*, John Lilly describes this experiment that the Defense Department did with a mule. The wargamers in the DOD were trying to figure out a way to blow up towns that were in very rocky, hilly country, in which cruise missiles would have had a very hard time making it over without hitting the radar screens, and without getting blown up by the anti-missile missiles. So, they had this idea of wiring up a mule — one electrode in the pleasure center, another electrode in the pain center, and to these wires they attached a sun compass in such a way that when the shadow was falling in one direction (one small wedge of the sun compass), the mule's pleasure center would be stimulated, and all other sections of that compass would stimulate the pain center. Then they loaded up this mule with a really ratty old pack, but inside the ratty old pack were two simulated nuclear warheads (they can make those things small), and took him out to a really hilly stretch of country. And they tracked that mule straight as an arrow — had a film of the mule, and I don't care what the obstacles were, the mule kept right on course. They were literally planning on sending this mule with live nuclear warheads over the hill and into the village — blast the mule into smithereens along with the village. So, you could do that with humans.

MC: Train them right and they'll do anything! "Die for your country!" A lot of people have done it!

MEGABRAIN THE BOOK

The book is about ways of enhancing mental functioning. Modern technological ways of achieving what people have tried to achieve through being sealed in a cave or through long years of meditative practice: intensifying awareness of internal states.

The Book Of Floating opened me up to research in the area of altering consciousness, not through the use of chemicals, nutrition or altering behavior patterns, but by means of controlling, through technological devices, what types of stimulation enters the brain and how much in control of that stimulation you are.

CHEMICALS VS. NEUROTEK

The machines produce immediate effects. I don't think that, in many cases, they are as powerful and noticeable as the effects you might get from a chemical dose. They are probably more controllable in the sense that once you have the experience, you can alter it in intensity the same way that you can turn up and down the volume on a radio. You can tune in to certain brain states, find the ones that you like and eliminate the other ones.

Sometimes chemicals might be a little more intense than some people would care for, other times, not intense enough. With these devices, it is possible to amp it up as much as you want. Then, if you get to the point where you are bored, tired, or decide that you don't want to deal with the experience anymore, you can turn the machine off.

One of the important points with these devices is that there is no real possibility for control by others. They are yours to do with what you will, to alter your consciousness as you will, for as short a period as you like.

THE ROSENZWEIG-DIAMOND RATS

[Dr. Mark Rosenzweig and Dr. Marian Diamond were] trying to find a relationship between learning and chemical activities in the brain. They had rats that were genetically the same, but divided into three separate groups. One group was placed in a sensory-deprived environment, one to a cage. Those rats were grown in what is called impoverished experience. Other rats were grown in typical laboratory environments, with a couple to a cage and as much light as they needed. These were called standard environments. The last group of rats were placed with playmates, up to a dozen, in very large cages with multiple levels, swings, slides and ladders. They were constantly faced with new experiences and challenges.

As they were analyzing the brains of these rats, they discovered that the brains of their enriched experience rats were heavier than the other rats! This is surprising because the scientific dogma of the time said that brains do not alter in response to experience. What you are born with, or what you have in early age, is what you're stuck with in terms of brain size. Some of the results were even more dramatic. Argentinian researchers put rats in superduper enriched environments and found that after only a few minutes of stimulation per day, these rats showed a similar type of brain growth.

As they went on, they said "Why should this be limited to just young rats?" So they began to test rats who were at the equivalent of human old age and had been kept in impoverished environments. Their brains responded with the same type of growth as youthful rats did. The evidence indicates that denser richer communication between neurons and larger glial cells are possible into old age. These studies were continued with higher mammals, clear up to apes, and showed that these kinds of activities took place. The animals who showed physiological brain growth also showed greater intelligence in a variety of tests.

The studies were stepped up and up. Finally they came to the realization that only about two minutes of enriched experience was enough to cause immediate and measurable alteration in brain structure. Some scientists

MEGABRAIN

a neurotek talk with author Michael Hutchison, by Gili unLTD

now say that the brain is capable of providing us with neurons on demand. Whatever the task demands, our brain responds by producing neural growth in that area.

The implication is that intense stimulation can lead to a very rapid brain growth. What we are finding is that the brain has a tremendous amount of plasticity. It responds to experience simply by changing. The stimulus takes place. Suddenly, the brain cells alter and never go back.

NEUROTEX

One way to look at the new technology is as a way of providing the type of superduper enriched environments that those rats were provided. By putting on one of these machines, you are able to provide your brain with an intensely enriching experience directed specifically to the brain. It is an experience that can be more controlled, more intense and more beneficial than any experience that you might have, haphazardly, through life. It is not a way of substituting the brain growth that results from living. It is a way of providing, for a few minutes, a very intense type of brain enrichment.

THE SYNCHRO-ENERGIZER

A lot of people find the Synchro-Energizer the most stimulating, in the sense that it is very immediately recognizable as stimulating. You put on a pair of goggles, each eye is surrounded by a circle of small light. At the same time, you put on headphones that produce a variety of sounds that you select and the console of the machine is producing an electromagnetic field that pulsates in rhythm with the lights and sound. By controlling the rate and intensity at which the lights flash and the sound beeps, you can alter your brain state.

You can turn down the frequency of the machine, pulling yourself down through the alpha range into the theta range. It is a range that most people only pass through when they are falling asleep or waking up. There is a tremendous burst of mental energy that takes place in your mind when you go into that state. The machine is good at facilitating entry into the subconscious.

With the Synchro-Energizer, which puts you very rapidly into a deep theta state, you are able to be physically asleep, with your body deeply relaxed and your

mind still highly alert. It is a very fascinating and highly productive state. A number of studies of zen monks have shown that when they get into their deepest states of meditation, they are physically deeply relaxed, almost asleep, and yet highly alerted, in other words, in that same theta state. They have found that monks who consistently produce this amount of theta are the ones that have the greatest amount of meditative experience.

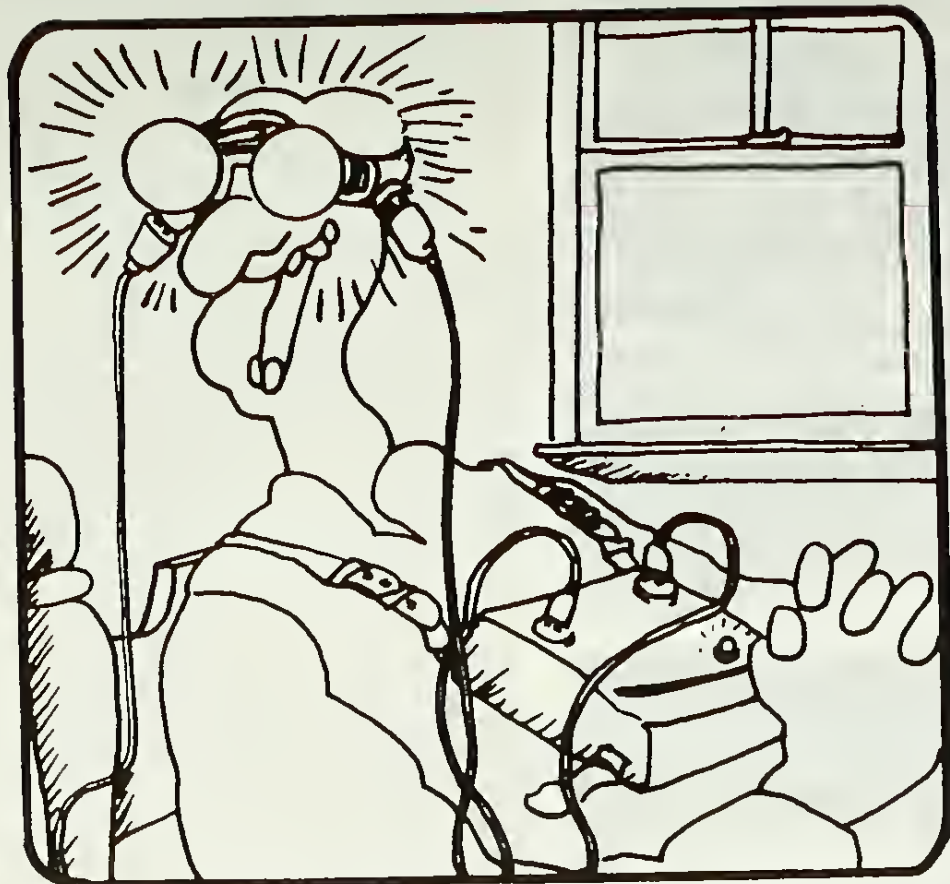
THE HEMI-SYNC

Robert Monroe invented the hemi-sync process because he was having what some people might call hallucinations. He called them out-of-body experiences. He felt that they all began with vibrations. He was interested in finding a way of producing vibrations that would induce this type of experience and found that putting one sound wave in one ear and a different sound wave in a second ear would produce a kind of whole brain vibration. When he combined a number of different sound waves in their brains, people felt that their minds were expanded and their mental make-up had benefited.

TENS AND ALPHA-STIM

Tens and Alpha-stim are actually sending electrical frequencies into the brain. Electrodes are hooked up to the earlobes, or in some cases, behind the ear. By sending a very minute electrical current into the brain that matches the electrical current that individual nerve cells operate on at optimal levels, you cause them to boost up to their optimal levels. In a sense, you are tuning the brain.

I was interested in what the effects would be on enhancing mental functioning in a variety of ways. Whenever I would put on the Alpha-stim, within five minutes it produced a deep physical relaxation combined with mental clarity and acuity. The characteristic always was, "Oh, yes, I am home again... This is the way that the brain is supposed to operate all the time." In some ways, we spend most of our lives operating at subnormal levels or capacities. These machines are ways of bringing brain activities up to optimal levels.



To say only that Sheldon enjoys electronics is to avoid a deeper issue

THE TRANQUILITE

The Tranquilite is a goggle that is pure blue and lighted inside. As you gaze at it for a few minutes, your brain turns off its sense of vision so that you are no longer seeing that field of blue. In addition to the goggle, it has a white noise generator to cut out sound. Put it on and within five minutes your sense of sight, sound, and the surrounding environment disappears completely and you're totally within inner space. People talk about using their tranquilite for a five-minute coffee break, a few minutes of bliss.

THE GRAHAM-POTENTIALIZER

The Graham Potentializer is a bed-like device that you lay on and it spins around slowly. You revolve through a magnetic field. The combination of the spinning and the electromagnetic field seems to have a very calming effect. It slows brain waves down into the alpha-theta range, stimulates certain areas of the limbic system and benefits Neuro Efficiency Quotients. It seems to work by the spinning stimulating the nerve endings that are suspended in liquid up the middle ear. This has a kind of euphoria-producing effect. What it stimulates is the very area of the inner brain that was stimulated back in the fifties by the experiments of James Olds, when he wired rats up to what he then called the Pleasure Center. The Graham Potentializer is giving a good massage to those pleasure areas of the brain, putting people in a mental state which produces more creative thought.

THE MIND MIRROR

The Mind Mirror is an EEG. Most typical biofeedback EEGs are very simple in that you select a certain level of brain activity that you are seeking and the machines are set to monitor that range. The Mind Mirror, on the other hand, shows you an image of the full spectrum of your brain wave activity, from the high Beta range down to the lowest Delta. It gives this brain reading for both hemispheres. By choosing certain self-regulatory techniques like breathing or visualization, you can watch how they alter the brain activity, and by having that fed back to you in real time, you can learn what activities cause desired brain states. If one of the things you are seeking is a balanced activity between the two hemispheres, you can learn to do it.

The inventor and users of this machine have found that there are certain characteristic mental configurations that are very similar to certain states of intense awareness. There are a number of different configurations that you can draw on paper as balanced patterns. You can try to attain those on the visual readout and produce the states that you desire.

THE CAP-SCAN

The Cap-Scan has multiple electrodes over the entire skull. The readings from those electrodes are sent into a computer where they are transformed into a color image of your brain that is projected on a monitor. What you are seeing looks like a color topographical map of some circular island, but is really a top view of your brain. Each color represents a different level of brain activity. Over a period of time, by watching and learning self-regulatory techniques, you can work on attaining hemispheric synchronization, which is when the same frequency and amplitude brain waves happens in both hemispheres of the brain. The inventor, Dr. Charles Stroebel, has found that certain visual configurations are characteristic of certain mental states.

The Cap-Scan is like biofeedback. You don't know how your brain does it, but over a period of time, it learns to do it. You can put someone into a very pleasurable state simply by hooking them up and saying, "Get a little more blue over there. Get some green out of that area." They don't know what they're doing but when they do it they find out that it is very pleasurable. They can hook people up to this while they are solving problems. They've done EEG's of people who are right in the midst of having a 'Eureka event.' You can record that event and make the reading permanent so that it can be played back. Then, place that on one half of the video monitor and on the other half you have your own brain wave activity. And you can try to make your brain activity congruent with that desired state. You could hook up some super-genius to this device and see what is happening in that brain, then try to put your own brain wave activity into that same state. You probably would not become a genius yourself, but you might experience a problem solving or creative state of mind.

THE FUTURE OF NEUROTEK

The devices that I described work in different ways. Now people are finding that when used in conjunction with each other, they seem to have a potentiating effect. One goal for the future is to find ways to combine these things and make them more powerful. Another goal is to make them more widely acceptable as stress reduction devices. These devices are not doing anything unnatural. They are not forcing the brain to do something that the brain doesn't do already. They are assisting people to think better, feel better, and to behave in ways that are more satisfying to them.

For more information:

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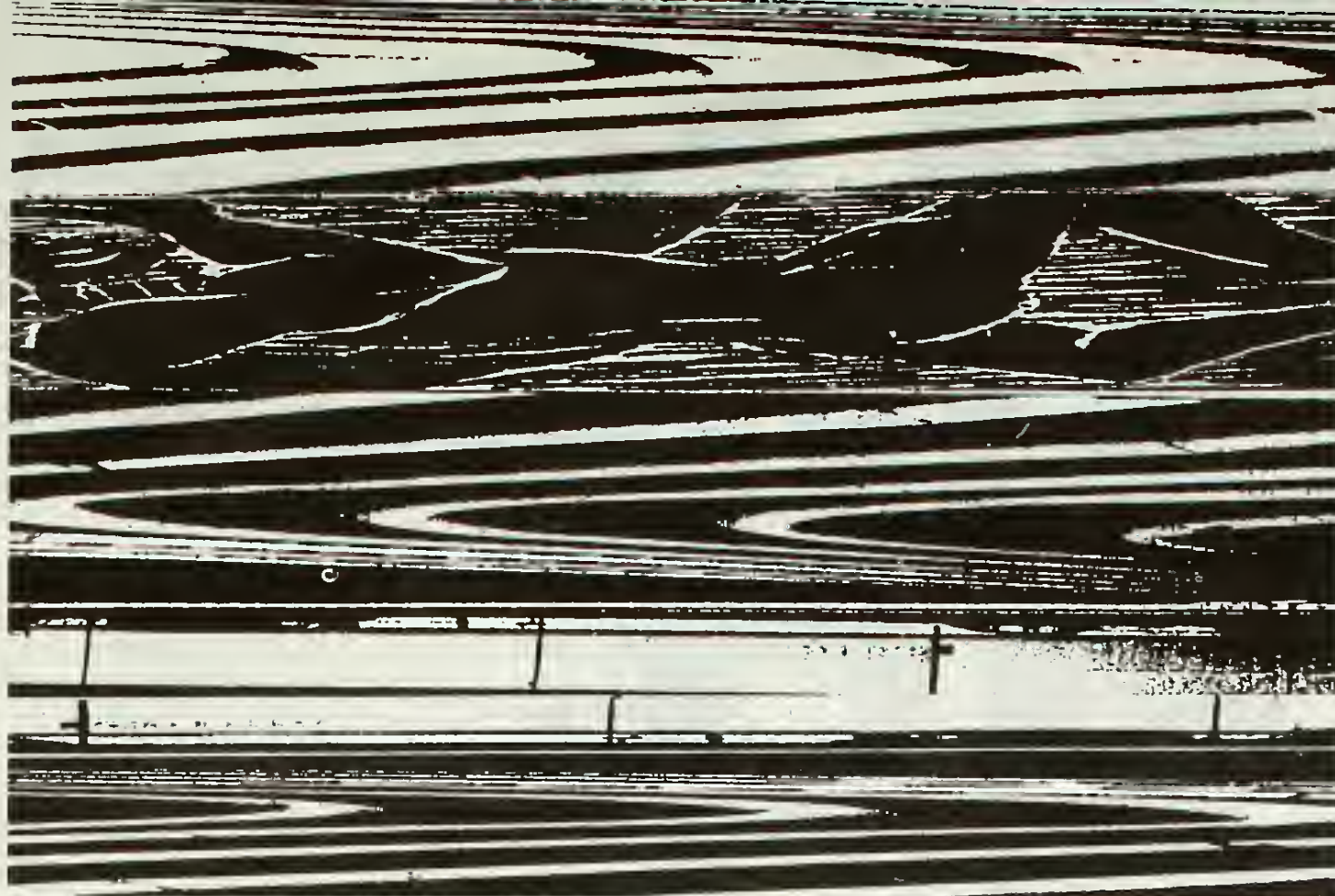
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The Technology of Interconnectedness

Hair pushed sideways, under the metal rimmed glasses his thin lips never crack a smile. Well, hardly ever. Without the distant warmth of the eyes beneath the glasses and the animated passion of the hands gesturing intelligently below the young 40-ish deadpan, he could be anything, a hero, a zero, a father, a worker, an uncle, a killer, a nice, middle-management-dull-guy.

But it's o.k. It's better than o.k. It's Lee Felsenstein.

Designer of some of the earliest personal computers, including the first Osborne, Felsenstein still earns his burgers by engineering electronic stuff with microprocessors and all that wizardry. If you've got an idea to sell the better electric mousetrap, he'll engineer it to your specifications. He'd prefer to invent more of his own stuff, start from scratch and then license it out after prototyping. Whatever. As he told *Microtimes* last summer, "Yes, we're going to make money, and we're going to do it in a couple of ways."

This is no greed fiend, however. I told you, it's o.k., it's Lee Felsenstein. I mean the guy has vision. He's one of us, in that he looks toward a future beyond the end of his nose. So to express this passion, in recent years, he has turned a long-standing interest in Community into those Community Memory terminals you Berkeleyites may have seen in a couple of locations around town. Were it not for his prestigious and prodigious electronics achievements, people might dismiss Felsenstein as an eccentric loon for this stuff. All kind of messages are on the Memory, from the ridiculous to the obscene. People walk by and say, "What is this, gimme a break." And it's not like these are the hottest items since Guess Jeans. Far from it.

But Felsenstein hopes these first fledgling terminal seeds will grow into loci of animated interaction, cusps of community energy, from which all manner of real human-to-human interchange can be facilitated. Each microcommunity around a terminal, the larger community at the abstract aggregate of terminals, the community as a whole communicating with other communities through other, independent Community Memory projects.

Whatever works. The point is "Community."

And "Community" is Lee Felsenstein's middle name.

Well, not really. In fact, I don't know what his middle name is or even if he has one, but the dude is certainly civic-minded. And visionary. And intellectual. And genuinely smart besides being intellectual. All in all, a rather attractive conversational partner.

High Frontiers caught up with him (we made an appointment, actually) at his spacious offices and workshops upstairs in the most post-psychedelic-radical-chic upscale-nueve-Yuppie quasi-Yummie officelike building in all of otherwise-sadly-provincial Berkeley, CA. There, I, Dr. J, accompanied by Lord Nose how good a photographer he is, not far from a small handful of very relaxed and occasionally bemused workers for Goleemics, Felsenstein's corporation, in an office sporting gadgetry, oversize circuit diagrams, clutterful piles of printed paper products, and a giant blowup poster of some short-haired early '60s gangly nerd standing betwixt large lumps of electronic equipment (guess who, time capsulated), we accosted him with our audiophotographic armory to procure the following.

Dr. J

LEE FELSENSTEIN: What's special about Community Memory is the interconnectedness. And that is a quality which, I think, will define the difference between existence in both the preindustrial society and the industrial society, and what might be called the post-industrial society. The technology now exists to allow for a much higher degree of interconnectedness without submitting oneself to the judgement of others. That, I think, defines a condition which ought to be considered revolutionary.

I remember the Berkeley Tribe, the break-away paper from the Berkeley Barb, was sort of running in parallel with the San Francisco Express and Good Times. We got a letter from Marvin Garson, who was running Good Times, saying "Why don't we merge?" I brought this up and someone said, "Oh no. They're much more of a dope-cultural thing. They're not political like we are" ...all these meaningless excuses basically saying, "That's their bunch, and I'm scared of any other bunch. We've got our bunch and our bunch is where we want to be." Well, I don't think we have the luxury of that kind of thinking. We can't build the kind of society we want based on that kind of territorial thinking. We have to reduce the differences between their bunch and our bunch. To make interconnections, overlaps, not just possible, but the norm, is the primary structural aim of Community Memory. You could have the same effect as Community Memory by using telephones, filing cabinets, and a lot of zombies. Very enthusiastic zombies, they'd have to be also. I suppose that's how you might characterize a computer.

We designed Community Memory specifically to facilitate what we call secondary communication, rather than primary communication.

I met Ivan Illich and he mocked me on the grounds that I was crazy to try to replace face-to-face communication with going "dee-dee-dee-dee" through terminals. He said "to talk to this person over here, why don't you just talk to the person instead of sending a message over the terminal." I said "what if you didn't know that was the person you wanted to talk to," and that set him thinking about it a little more.

HIGH FRONTIERS: I have an acquaintance who writes for philosophy journals. He said that these days there are so many people writing so many articles for journals that if someone were to come up with something utterly brilliant, it would have a very small chance of ever actually being discovered because of the sheer mass of information. An editor receives hundreds of submissions and can't give enough thought to each particular one. Now, applying that idea to Community Memory, where you're not censoring information, when you get 5-10-20,000 messages on a system like this, doesn't there have to be some structure imposed on it?

The structure has to grow and shouldn't be imposed. I think the example you give of editors is good because they're working within a broadcast medium or print. That information radiates from a central point. It has to go through the head of the editor, or a tiny group of editors, and then out again. Sure enough, we've got a bottleneck. Usually, that's solved by decreeing what information is important and what is not. We are fundamentally opposed to that structure. We are trying to set up a non-broadcast operation, of which there are several in operation. The most sophisticated and extensive is the telephone system. There's also the postal system, transportation systems, and ultimately, face-to-face conversation. The operation of a non-broadcast medium implies that you cannot filter the information through one human head. You can keep information in one non-human storage place.

The method we look toward for handling this problem is to use people whom we generally know as information freaks. These people take up interest areas. They snoop around within that area and narrow what they're looking at. They will be up on what is going on there. They will become a kind of editor, but an editor without any control. An editor observer.

They can comment, react...

Commentator might be a good phrase. They can make the benefits of their commentary available. People would be able to subscribe to the services of one or more commentators. But all the information within the system is fully public, so there's no way of fencing it off.

Can you give me an example of an information area that a commentator might...

Sure. The best example we have is basically what you'd call hackery. That was the outlaw database that was developed in 1973. There was one guy who came around and he had a lot of friends who had all this information among themselves of how to cheat payphones, and how to cheat BART, and that sort of thing. They put this information on Community and used the index word "Outlaw." And by decreeing that word, and passing it around, he defined a database. You don't have to get any permission from the operators in the system. All you have to do is agree on a key word or phrase. That data grew to be one of the biggest identifiable databases.

The example of the outlaw database is important because there you have one person who really did put in his time nuzzling around and browsing and looking at what was going on and making his connections... creating an order out of what was, to him, disorder.

The industrial super-structure decided against personal computers

You've talked about the idea that information can't be seen as a commodity because it's intangible. It's replaceable. It's not like a piece of furniture that can be produced and once it's sold, it's gone. You share with many progressive people the idea of a society where information is freely available. Where do you draw the line? For instance, operating systems and programs to gather information... should they also be freely available? And should there be no licensing? Would you go beyond that to copywrited books? Should laws on intellectual property be redefined? And maybe even hardware - that's information. Should that actually be free? Are you in a contradiction by selling electronic designs, which are, in a sense, a type of information?

That's an excellent example! Because we have almost no protection for that kind of intellectual property in electronics.

You can't copywrite that?

You can only copywrite a piece of paper. If you simply drew it differently, then that's it. There's a copywrite that they put on printed circuitboards, but that's only to prevent photographic copying of the circuitboard. If you re-lay the circuitboard, it's yours.

I'm setting up a project called "The Hacker's Mac," which is to generate a public domain, future-type Macintosh machine. I'm publishing detailed specifications adequate for someone to build from as I do them. The aim of it is to get an artifact into existence, the existence of which would otherwise be in jeopardy because the commercial system is not going to go about it that way. We know from our experience with the CPM open architecture machines, none of which is proprietary, that having that information available and having that be able to serve as a basis for a generation of more informa-

tion, i.e. software, created wealth. And it will do so again, given the chance. IBM tried a personal computer of their own design that was completely sealed off, completely proprietary. You're not told anything about it. It was a tremendous failure because everyone said, "It's very nice. It's IBM. But here I can get something for a tenth of the price that's got 50 times the software." The more software, the wider the range of the software, the more useful the equipment, the better off everybody is for having it around.

People want to send their money to the person who wrote the software, not to some agent. There's an important point. It sort of flies in the face of your conventional Adam Smith economist philosophy... "If you don't have to pay for it, no one will pay for it." It's not true. People are paying for what they don't have to pay for and they're paying voluntarily. Of course, most people are not. But many people are. What this means is there is value to systems which otherwise could be replicated.

People would come to me when I was Vice-President of engineering for Osborne, and they would want to sell us an idea. I told them that we do not buy ideas. We buy implementations. The implementation can never be completely disconnected from the situation of usership, the context of a design's use. It's in that relationship between a design and its context that there is room for the agency of designers and people who support designs.

In the electronics field, when you put something out, you basically are protected only by your speed in putting the next thing out. We don't file patents. A patent takes two years to get. That's fast for a patent. Nobody could afford to wait two years in this field.

I'm not getting into the grand philopophy... should all information be free? Well, yes. In an ideal society where all things are free, information should be free. It's tempting to think about moving toward that. And I see that happening, in a certain way, in the area of computer software. I don't see that we're there yet. We've still got quite a number of contradictions, and I say thank god for that because the contradictions provide the vector, the motivation, the direction, the force for the direction.

What do you suggest people do to follow their vision. What can they do when they need to earn a living and make it in the day-to-day world?

I've been doing it! I think the most important thing to recognize is the centrality and the importance of vision and imagination. I realized this same point, maybe when I got my first "D" grade in high school. It was one of the elite high schools. One of the main focal points of the establishment. Everyone was competing for grade points down to the 3-decimal point region. Well, in a way, a certain world closed down to me at that point. So I took a different approach. I basically got off the bus at that point. So I had to figure out what I should do.

I read a lot of science fiction at that point. Everything I could find by Heinlein. *Stranger in a Strange Land* had just been published and I got turned on, in a strange way, to the very practical nature of his fantasy. That spoke to me somehow. So I kind of decided that was a good way to live — to live inside a sci-fi novel. What I was after was some sort of quality of happiness that was grown in the imagination. I was a day-dreamer from a small child. I learned how to daydream efficiently — to be able to conceptualize designs and implement those designs. The direction I took then was to become a kind of athlete of the imagination, in the sense of applied imagination.

It helps a lot if you don't have to make a lot of money. I am, at present time, making what you would call a lot of money, because I eventually learned that you can set the level of what you make, and that's kind of an independent variable in the definition of your daydreaming. There are fewer external limits than people believe. I hear people saying, "I wish I could do

this or that," and my usual response is, "why don't you!" Basically it comes down to because I've chosen to do something else. They couch it in phrases like "I have to do this," and so forth. They're not living in a feudal society. They're not going to be killed if they don't do that. They choose to do that. And it's that tension between what they choose to do and what they want to do that, I think, causes a fair amount of misery.

I don't know how to deal with people who don't know how to use their imagination. I get a great deal of pleasure out of exercising my imagination, out of daydreaming a solution to things. It's all very much fun. All of a sudden, you've got to follow through on it, and that takes some doing and some training. I also enjoy that kind of activity, because it results in something that never would have existed otherwise. Something that performs the way I imagine it would perform and means great things to other people.

I don't really know how to talk to people who are critics of technology. There's what I call the error of critiqueism. That's a nice little joke because it's committing the same error. That is those who feel that the highest, best activity that the mind can carry out is to create a critique of something. I don't believe that. I get put off by it because when I dream something up and build it somebody's going to say, "Yeah, but it doesn't do something or other," or, "Here's the reason why it's not good." That is useful from a certain standpoint. But for somebody to take a superior attitude and say, "You spend your time dreaming up these little widgeits, but I know how to criticize these things and therefore I'm honored." Well, I don't give them the honor, because they don't do the work. I want to force, and I think I've been doing that in the whole area of microcomputers, the critics to get their hands dirty with actually changing things to be more like they want them to be. And that is very scary for a critic, because their whole training, their whole life has been concentrated on what's wrong with something. We tell them, "Okay. Make it right." You see the most fatuous kinds of flip-offs you can imagine: "I don't do that kind of thing," "I could do that kind of thing," or, "It's beneath me, beyond me." I'm not going to pay that much attention to critics of technology unless they can prove that they can do it as well. Like George Bernard Shaw said, "Those who can't do, criticize."

I'm not getting into the grand philosophy... should all information be free?

Does providing information technology to people without our industrial base make them much more dependent on outside sources for hardware and software maintenance? Do you see any benefits to this type of activity?

I'd refer you to Ivan Illich's *Tools for Conviviality*, in which he sketched out what he learned about the spread of radio technology to Central America. He pointed out that no more than two years after the introduction of radio into remote areas there were people there who could fix radios. You can learn how to use and how to maintain and how to extend technology. You can do this on a non-traditional basis. Most of the electronic constructions that go on in this country are strictly informal.

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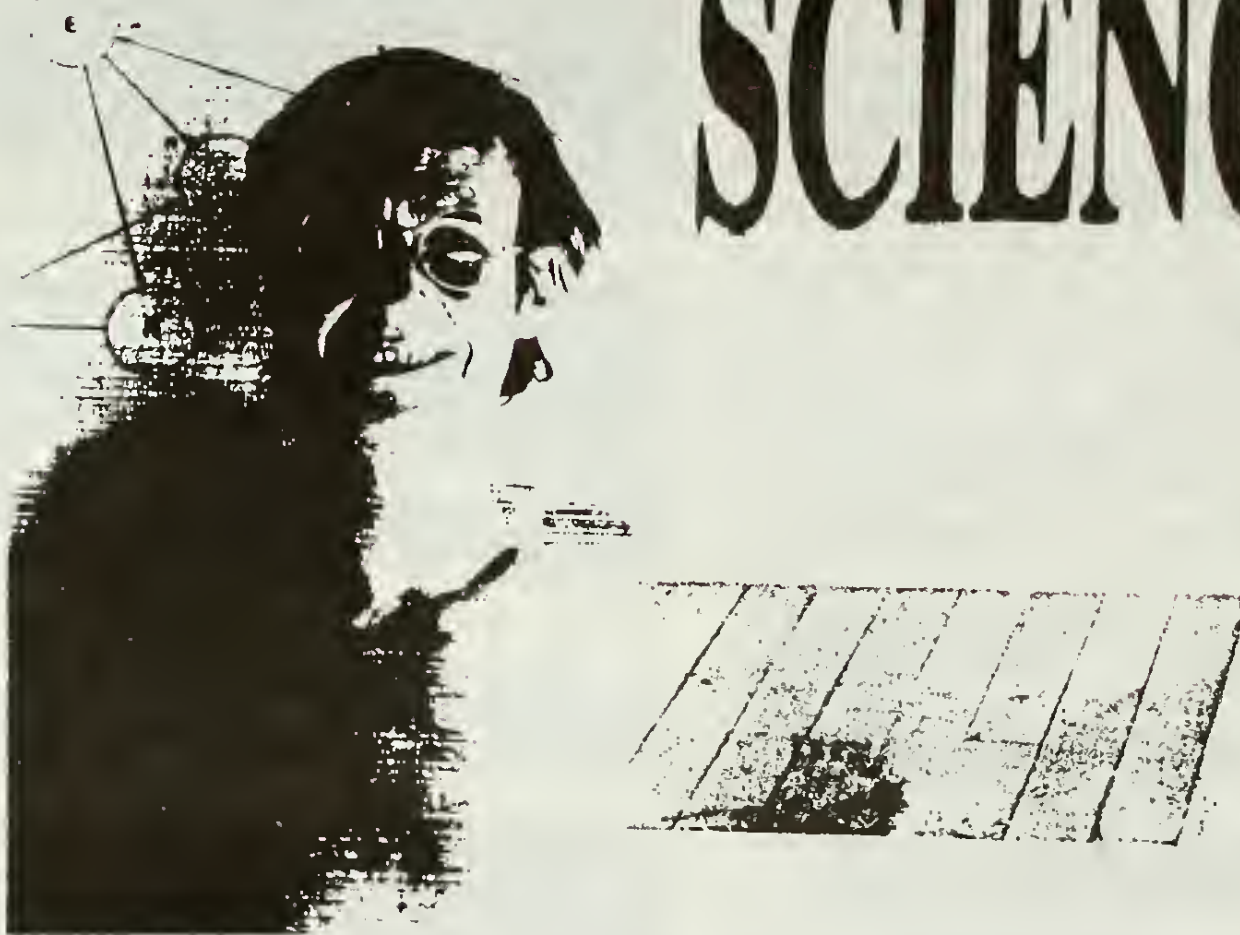
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Nick Herbert

FRINGE SCIENCE



The task of science is to explore the unknown, to increase and consolidate our knowledge of the mysterious world in which we live.

While some knowledge involves a mere extension of what we already know, there certainly are wide intellectual territories that cannot be reached by presently known paths. To increase the chance that these unknown paths may be found, at least some scientists should be as unrestricted as possible in their choice of research topics, should be isolated from economic, political, and cultural pressures which encourage safe, fashionable, and immediately productive research. Ideally, universities and some industrial research laboratories are supposed to provide a supportive environment for research along the strange as well as the more familiar paths.

However, even in the secure atmosphere of the university laboratory, most researchers, timid creatures of convenience and fashion, do not search where the darkness is deepest. They look where they judge there is enough light to give them a reasonable chance of success. And who could blame them for this? Which of us would be brave or crazy enough to devote his or her life to an enterprise which will almost surely fail?

Here is where the fringe scientist comes in. Out of some uncommon sense of duty, strange obsession, or simple perversity, the fringe scientist is inexorably drawn to a corner of the Mystery where human ignorance is most complete and success least likely.

One is likely to find such characters, for instance, working on methods for communicating with the dead, with discarnate spirits, or extraterrestrial intelligences. Many are exploring new theories of consciousness. Consciousness, they feel, with an intensity lacking in the usual psychology lab, is an intellectual black hole; our knowledge of consciousness is close to zero compared to the amount of mystery that yearns to be revealed. Consequently we often find fringe scientists consorting with mediums, with psychics, with "channels" of

dubious reputation who claim to communicate with extraterrestrial and extradimensional beings. Fringe scientists are interested in time travel, telepathy, psychokinesis, tantric sex, hypnosis, psychedelic drugs, wild-card models of mind, God and universe, a universe that they passionately believe to be home to innumerable sentient beings, many not so far away, beings whose minds are, in H. G. Wells' famous words, "to our minds as our minds are to those of the beasts that perish."

Of course the most interesting fringe scientists are those whose research is too obscure to be described in familiar terms, researchers who struggle to create unearthly geometries, who seek to decode and appreciate strange music and even stranger mathematics, who are experimenting with as yet unspeakable forms of being, knowing, and interacting.

Among these unclassifiable types of work one must certainly include recent feminist-oriented inquiries into the structure of reality, research which emphasizes participation, connectedness, and pleasure instead of analysis, separation, and power. On account of research in this dark and feminine direction, our descendents may well inhabit a world rich and varied beyond our wildest dreams.

Arthur Koestler has described Johannes Kepler, a kind of 16th-century fringe scientist, as a "sleepwalker," who lived half in the ordinary world and half in the world of his dreams of cosmic harmony. "Sleepwalker" is a good term for the fringe scientist, whose work is usually carried out in a darkness blacker than that faced by the ordinary scientist. Plying his obscure trade, the fringe scientist can be seen to be pursuing a kind of "pure research," the kind of research Werner von Braun had in mind when he said: "Pure research is what you do when you don't know what you are doing."

Mind Power Through Electronic Image Processing

Stephan is a video artist who has worked with Jefferson Starship, The Clash, the Dead Kennedy's and others. He also VJ's at the dance club "The Stone" in San Francisco. He approached us after a Tim Leary lecture and told us that he had interesting information about the high frontier of computer/video technology. He does. This interview has been one of the most popular around the H.F. office.

STEPHAN: If you can imagine telling people at the turn of the century, "Hey, they have ways of affecting people with sounds and light," if you'd explained it to them like that then, they'd have thought you were mad. But if you told them you had developed new ways of telling stories, they would've thought of this as an evolution, going from telling stories around the campfire, to being printed in books, to movies. Consciousness is also going through transition. The use of consciousness, ways of changing consciousness, are constantly going through transition.

HIGH FRONTIERS: So we're going to fud out about technological ways of altering consciousness?

And the social ramifications. Plus, some of the more immediate changes going on that effect entertainment. You can see how these transitions take place. With just plain linear videotape — there's obviously thousands of creative possibilities, myriads of creative possibilities inherent when you have stereo sound and you can use computer graphics, data processing. These days you can make absolutely any image your mind can conjure up. These are interesting times.

At the same time, a lot of people aren't pressing the boundaries of creative disciplines as much as they might because of archaic copyright laws, etc. Archaic laws of refund for the creative person are actually hindering new forms of creativity. For instance, take DJs entertaining people with records in a club, as opposed to videos in a club. When I play videotapes, I'm like a DJ, except I have an added medium, I have pictures. I can juggle audio elements and video elements in any number of combinations. But if I want to cut up a promotional tape and get excerpts, I start running into legal problems. Whereas a DJ doesn't. It comes down to the sense that videotapes are based around a linear, narrative, storyline type of programming, like movies. Whereas, obviously, video in a club is more interactive than that.

You have to play whole videos as entities? You can't chop them up, recombine them?

Yes, but this is only because that's the way it was before. Nobody's addressed the problem. The New Music Seminar in New York was the first time video directors got together and said we need these requirements from legal services departments of record companies. If they paid a little bit of attention to us, it might rejuvenate the whole medium, which is, honestly, in trouble right now. It's gone into the back alley of girls, cars, and smoke videos. It's turned into another means of advertising at the expense of the creative dimension.

Only six years ago, video, as a medium, was hip. Virtually everything in the medium was creative. Everybody was an explorer. Everybody was a pioneer.

These days, we have a situation where people are essentially doing very functional work. MTV has closed the situation instead of opening up to innovative people who might throw new ideas in. Most of the work is given to Hollywood and Madison Avenue hacks. Bob Gerald, who did Michael Jackson's "Thriller," came into it and said, "I don't understand. Where are the kids? I came into this industry and there are all the guys I knew who were doing TV commercials." And he's completely correct. Where are they? A lot of them are working in newsrooms editing videotape because they got so pissed off that they had no outlet for their genuine creativity. Most of the best music video editors and directors I've ever known no longer work in the medium and haven't for about four years.

Do you still do videos?

I do. At the moment I'm doing one with a band called Specimen. The basic plotline is that the main character is some genetic material that comes down from outer space in a test tube, and lands in a pond in Golden Gate Park. He emerges from the pond and goes to a party where there's lots of sinister doilies and anatomically correct cake. I've taken very innocuous elements such as doilies and cake and turned them into something rather more disturbing. It's intended for clubs. It's intended for an adult audience. It's intended for people who have the intelligence to be able to see when something's tongue-in-cheek. I've always had a policy of never using stage blood. Violence and sexism have always been completely outside the realm of anything I've directed. In this one people eat cake with stage blood as a kind of parody of the blood-sucking freaks kind of movie.

Imagine, if you will, when somebody somehow discovered that some herb had a certain effect on them. Or a combination of herbs had an effect. Then they did some trial and error, they refined it and eventually we come up with a whole myriad of chemicals, plants, etc. which can cause all kinds of different desirable and undesirable effects and physically alter our consciousness. Well, similar movements are afoot in the study of light and sound. Light and color have an effect on every life form. There's no doubt about that. It's one of the primary influences. You only have to look at the cycle of a plant to realize that. Everything from nutrition — photosynthesis — to its cycle of weightfulness and nonweightfulness is determined by light.

Light has a very powerful effect on the individual. They proved that pink somehow seems to numb prisoners so they started painting prison cells pink. You find that those kinds of things are very widely accepted disciplines, but they're still in the crudest forms. Now, with digital video processing, we can change hues, and with biofeedback techniques we can directly measure the effect of the changing hue, the effect of light on the dilation of the pupils, which is another primary way in which light affects the individual, human response to form and composition. So what's happening now is the same exponential acceleration that's gone on in the pharmaceutical industry is going on in electronic image processing. As we're going on, we're getting more and more precise ideas about what it is that influences

**You turn on the
ecstasy channel. Turn
on the metaphysical
revelation channel.**

people. To the point where certain experiments have created breakthroughs which have been very interesting.

I personally have experienced an LSD flashback, which I've never experienced in any other circumstances. I've never had an LSD flashback apart from one time when it was electronically induced — and that was by complete accident. It involved multiple video screens. Essentially, it was video special effects on a Quanto DP 5000. After staring at the screens for a certain amount of time, I tried to get the flow of the digital feedback correct. I actually found a psychoactive response.

Did you see patterns of a particular type?

Yes. The patterns were basically like subway graffiti. The patterns were very much of an intentionally psychedelic nature. There was everything from comic art to Aztec art. We processed the images and while staring at them for a certain amount of time, I started feeling, as did the other people, very psychedelized, to the point where when I left the studio I had full-scale hallucinations...carpet patterns rising off the sidewalk, etc.

Are people actually designing...

One of the major problems is getting research money. To get on to a DP 5000 system or a Quantum Mirage system is a very expensive proposition. It costs several hundreds of dollars an hour. Most of these things are in institutions and they're there for a purpose. They're there for car commercials. They're not there to experiment with the outer limits of affecting what is possible with consciousness. We're also in a situation where the best of the image processing hardware is, in fact, able to do things that are limited only by the imaginations of people who are using them. This is something which I feel is going to come very much to the fore in the next 10 years. You have organizations like SIGGRAPH, which is Special Interest Group Graphics, a computer graphics association, and they're very interested in the outcome of computer graphics in dealing with issues such as resolution, graphics capabilities, storage of information. Many of them are psychedelic veterans. Many of the people working in the forefront of computer graphics pretty much have to be, so they will have the mental flexibility to deal with those things. It's no coincidence that America is leading Russia in the development of high technology. If you saw the people who are actually conceiving of this technology... they've needed quite a bit of mental loosening up before they could come up with something like a home-thinking machine.

Can you tell us more about the processes that are being used to alter consciousness?

Essentially, everything that is known now has been known for thousands of years. It's an issue of efficiency. The cerebellum is a developing instrument from generation to generation. But in terms of its basic responses, we will respond to the color red the same way as a Buddhist monk 2000 years ago. We respond to the rhythmic repetition of the patterns of the mandala in the same way as somebody thousands of years ago would. What's different about being able to do it using digital processing is the speed and the keenness of the delivery. It means we can deliver these consciousness-expanding mandalas. Also, we have the element of time. Take strobelights. A picture of strobelights ain't going to do it. You either get a black or a white. But if you add the element of time, strobelights can instigate an epileptic fit. So you can see that just by the addition of time we can create, for instance, a strobing mandala which rather than putting you into an epileptic fit can put you into a restive state.

I must emphasize that this is not an exact science. People know that you can affect changing consciousness electronically. There's a lot of interest in that area. Many people are either being quiet about it because of its inherent eccentricity as a concept, or people who are into it are quiet for another reason. Some legislation might be passed which would cut down on their affairs. But this is a dawning field, no doubt about it.

Could you talk about the effect of the medium itself — television?

There's a lot of people who liked television as a medium, and hated what was done with it.

Let's distinguish between the medium itself and its applications. Just how the thing itself effects consciousness.

Obviously everything from seeing 30 images a second as opposed to 20 or 50 has an effect. Take movies, which are projected at 24 frames a second, the limitations of the medium are basically what one has to work with. What's interesting about television is direct delivery. It may be possible, at some point in the near future, to have a calming image or sequence of images which will be delivered to people's homes. There could also be an exciting, or revelatory, or ecstatic experience. There's no reason why these things can't be dealt with a lot more directly. You turn on the ecstasy channel. Turn on the metaphysical revelation channel.

What about a hook-up of people's minds through video?

We already have that, to an extent, but on two fronts. Many people in the self-realization disciplines are actually realizing rudimentary telepathic abilities. Many more people these days realize that vibes or atmosphere is, in fact, a very crude form of telepathy. Even a truck driver can tell when the pressure's up in the bar and the fight's going to start. So, even the grossest of consciousnesses has some sort of telepathic component. It's the same as a baby who can make out indistinct shapes and colors, but can't necessarily define the form. So on one level, there's a natural propensity that's inherent in all of us. We do have at least rudimentary telepathic ability. We already have mindlink in computer networks. Now, between minds that's incredibly unwieldy media. We have cables, modems, calls. Now, the next is voice recognition. In fact, there was just a conference here on voice recognition systems. It was as big as some computer conferences ten years ago. That's definitely the next step towards a more direct link. The need to type will then be obsolete. You'll then be able to input more directly. (Obviously there's a huge gap between thoughts and words.)

We can, in a rudimentary way, mind read with an electroencephalograph. We can see alpha wave activity. So we do have the very crudest sense of all the materials, technologically. I personally would like to hope that people somehow develop their natural abilities at the same time as technological means will lead them



to discover their innate abilities, in the same way that many people who experimented with psychedelics got into forms of yoga and physical and mental disciplines and self-improvement. They actually found other ways to achieve the same, or even more radical, effects through other means. But they were introduced to it in a way that was accessible and that material minds could grasp.

Remember Richard Alpert's trip to India where somebody said that LSD was god in a material form? Americans needed something material to latch on to. That's exactly what I feel is going to happen with much of the electronics. People are going to realize eventually that the issue here is not the paraphernalia. It's not the "How many mega-byte memory?" or "How many micrograms?" There's mindpower involved here! The technology is going to be of major assistance. It seems to me many people feel that this is another way of god, if you like, manifesting, making itself become accessible.

I think that many people have rightfully become mistrustful of chemical means. On the other hand, there are generations of people to come whose minds are going to need that shock which is going to send them along that quest for self-discovery.

I was talking with F.M. Esfandiary in Los Angeles. He thinks what's really going to happen is surgical implants.

Implants are very, very interesting. But I think they're going to be about as widespread in popularity as trepaning. I just don't think that people are that interested in having something which may effect a permanent change. Surgical solutions have rarely been among the more attractive. You don't want to keep opening your cranium every time somebody comes out with a new model.

For there to be major changes in society, there are going to have to be intermediary agents. There are going to have to be ways of getting the monkey to respond to the universe that's around it. But when it comes down to it, the mind is capable of everything. Everything else is just stimulus for the mind. Whether it be chemicals, whether it be physical repetition...

Somebody who's sitting in an office might think they need to go up a mountain occasionally to get a perspective; but then again, you can have the most open of minds sitting in a prison cell.

Astral projection, I believe, is another largely ignored area. I can't comprehend why it's so little discus-

sed. It's one of the eternal mysteries of life to me. I think people are gradually going to realize that it's something that's available to them. In actual fact, I'm working on an entertainment project which is based upon using astral projection as a super power.

I think people are really ignoring a large area of their own potential. Maybe it'll require a hero that'll show them what it's like on the other side. This project may take the form of a comic book, a movie, maybe a series of short three-minute dream segments, which is another thing I want to get into. Basically, it's an update of the Dr. Strange concept. Somebody who basically has talents that are available to anyone who wishes to develop them. It's going to be very rigorously researched, but utterly fantastic. Everything's going to be possible. It's going to deal with the mundane things that the six million dollar man deals with. It'll deal with things like Atlantis, and there's going to be a feeling of conspiracy, a whodunit element as a way of indulging people by using genuine or looney conspiracy theories. It's going to use solid research and Edgar Cayce. It's basically going to be adventures with psychic men and women on the astral plane. My hope is that it can be made into a movie with representations of these otherworldly environments and other dimensions being done with high resolution computer graphics. I believe that some of the applications of computer graphics eventually will be to free human imagination, and the communication of human imagination, from the confines of physical reality. People will be able to invent worlds with absolutely no relationship to physical reality whatsoever. People are actually going to be able to put the most impossible of their dreams up there on the screen for other people to see. I think the first step, right now, is to make it so that an ordinary human can be dexterous with the medium, which is why the computer graphics artists' current fascination with ultra-realism is a very, very positive thing. Once you get a grip on that, you can really go beyond it. That stands true, as well, for exploring your consciousness. I think you need a firm grip on reality before you can expand your idea of reality. It needs to be rooted and grounded.

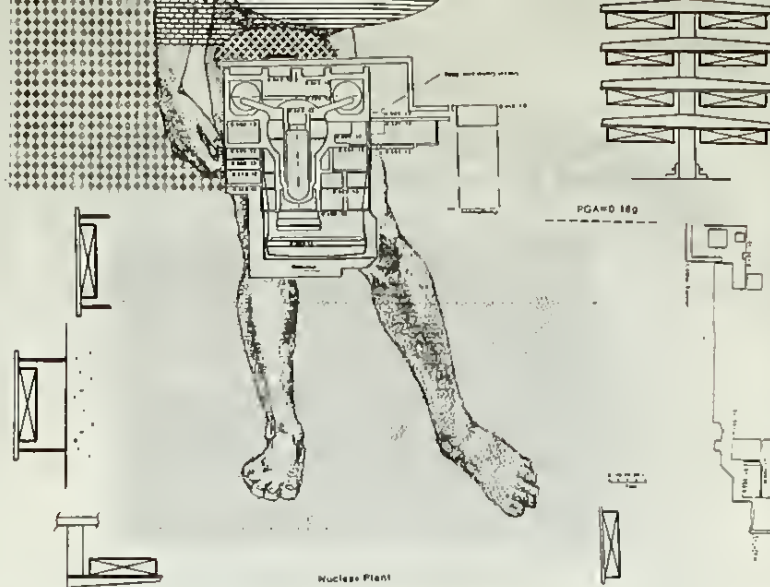
I'd also like to mention three-dimensional storage and retrieval. Electronically, it's definitely here now. We can create these realities.

Holograms?

No, hologram is such an archaic term. Holograms are unwieldy. What I mean is being able to store things from your memory, or your imagination, in 3-D in a computer memory. Many of the things you see in *Tron* are things that exist in 3-D in the computer's memory, but they're retrieved in a two-dimensional manner. But you can swoop around in these environments. Look at "Money for Nothing" (Dire Straits video). There's 3-D stuff in there, but it's retrieved in 2-D. The analogy is playing a stereo record on a mono record player. 3-dimensional monitors do exist. Genestro has one involving a moving mirror which moves 30,000 positions a second. So it will be possible in a very short time to recreate whole environments, as in Ray Bradbury's *The Illustrated Man*, where the children had the playroom and they could call up a number of imaginary environments. There are several 3-D monitors at the Lawrence Livermore Lab.

The political ramifications are very interesting. If people don't really gain control of the high technology themselves, they're probably going to be living in prison blocks that look like luxury apartments when they turn their projector on. But we could have a whole new "brave new world," where people could actually have a universe that was their hobby... that was entirely their own invention. When we buy our new holoom (in deference to your holographic imagery), we just seed it with a yin-yang algorithm and off you go — throw in a couple of variables, six sexes for instance, or you want the entire universe to move faster than light... apart from that you're on your way.

IN FLASH FORWARD



With F.M. Esfandiary

F. M. Esfandiary is a futurist whose three books, Optimism One, Upwingers, and Telespheres, published in the early 70s', never found a popular market. However, these works have had a tremendous influence on people working in the cutting edge of that field. He has three new books about to be published and is currently teaching future studies and renewable resources at UCLA in Los Angeles, California.

F.M. Esfandiary: My optimism flows from major developments or breakthroughs in the late 20th century, specifically the fact that we are breaking free from this planet. We're suddenly out there in the solar system and beyond. We're opening up the limitlessness of the universe — limitless energy, limitless raw materials, limitless time, limitless space, limitless abundance, limitless potentials, limitless future.

The other reason for my optimism is that we're also breaking free of our organic, animal, primitive, finite bodies. We are striving to reach out and become immortal. So this twin effort to break out of the limitations of time and of space as we become universal and immortal, I think is enough reason to be optimistic.

High Frontiers: What about the problem of people using these new technologies like genetics for genocide and war? How do you see us being able to evolve past that and create something of beauty and not of terror? There is a lot of public fear associated with genetics in particular.

A lot of people are mired in the past and can only view things through the perspective of guilt, shame, anxiety, doubt and fear. But these breakthroughs that we see happening all around us are circumventing or precluding the need for conquest by exploitation and manipulation. We have been exploitative, manipulative organisms, in part because we have been pathetic creatures. We're finite. We know we can be easily threatened, easily destroyed and injured. We have been at the mercy of the constraints of this limited biosphere and so forth. But if we break out of limitations and out of scarcity and finiteness, and evolve into, or break into limitlessness and vastness and openness and immortality and universalism, there is less and less reason to be greedy, exploitive and so on. I don't suggest that all this can happen over night. We do carry the baggage of millions of years in ourselves. But it'll all happen in the early part of the 21st century as we evolve into not only transglobal, but trans-solar and immortal beings. We will break out of these finite physiologies that have caused us so much pain, so much suffering, and have rendered us vulnerable to all kinds of limitations including death.

Twenty years ago when a handful of us talked about abundance, the ideas were viewed with a lot of skepticism, but today I think the prospect for opening up the universe of abundance is becoming more and more acceptable. I don't think people in decision-making areas act on this or make decisions to accelerate the pace of abundance. But it doesn't really matter because it's too late in the game now. There are a whole lot of forces loose in the world that are propelling us every day toward this new abundance. If the United States

Government under Reagan does not invest intelligently and enough into the development of solar energy, well, never mind. Other people in other places will do that. We're developing solar energy every day. Companies are getting involved. Individuals are getting involved. Other governments across the world are getting involved. So we're really moving in the direction of solar energy, fusion, wind energy, opening up the raw materials of this planet, the oceans, and as we move across it, the solar system. So I'm really not very preoccupied with what the old centralized, bureaucratized, power-hungry remnants are involved with. They're not the ones that are really making the important decisions of our times. Seen in the long view of history, they are the ones whose influences are receding, in part because their ways of thinking, their perceptions, are from another age. There are a whole lot of other forces loose that are creating, fashioning the decisions. Thanks to global telecommunication, thanks to the new abundance, the new affluence, the new mobility, the new values, whole new generations grew up relatively free of the old coercive environments, are more able to make decisions on their own, are less manipulating and manipulable.

Could you enumerate some of the forces that are propelling us?

It's a fusion of software and hardware. The software is the fact that our values are changing. There are generations rising in the world that were brought up in essentially permissive, open global environments. They are not as power oriented as people were in the past. They are more oriented toward reciprocity, sharing, love. They're not as mistrustful or as paranoid as the older generations were. You notice that I'm speaking in comparative terms. I'm not suggesting that the young generation is free of all the glitches of the past. But I feel in an evolutionary and historical sense that there is a rapid diminution, a rapid phase-out of a lot of these old bugs. So you have individuals, or whole generations, who are much more open to change, more trusting, more disposed to global interconnections, more disposed to idealism or optimism, and who also believe that things can happen, or can be made to happen. They are not, in other words, black-holed in pessimism or negation or cynicism. These are kids who grew up in worlds where things were possible, things could happen. It was possible for them to make things happen in their own immediate environments. Optimism, until recent times, was very suspect.

Then there is a whole lot of hardware that is helping to recontext, refigure our world. And what are some of these hardwares? For instance, global telecommunication. The fact that we're able to send information across the planet in microseconds, micromoments. Things are happening much more rapidly thanks to global telecommunications. The rate of change, the rate of progress is accelerating. What took twenty or thirty or forty years at one time is now taking three or four years. Global transportation systems, again, are helping to bring about global cohesion. We may not see it because we are right smack in the middle of it. But if we could see our world from the perspective of 2020 or 2030, and then flash back to the 1980's, what we would see hap-

It'll all happen in the early part of the 21st century as we evolve into trans-solar and immortal beings.

pening is an acceleration of change away from nationalisms and tribalisms, essentially vestigial self interest, to a kind of globalization. And then, apart from all this, you see the emergence of intelligent systems. Everything around us grows more intelligent. Our communities grow more intelligent. And in time, we ourselves will grow more intelligent. Our manners of accessing information and accessing the abundance grow more intelligent. In addition to all this, we're opening up more and more resources. Again, if we played back these years from the vantage point of 2030, we will see that our planet was moving massively from the world of monopolizable, controllable and polluting fossil fuels to a whole universe of post-fossil abundance — solar energy, fusion, etc., etc. All of these resources are limitless, abundant. They are potentially very inexpensive once we develop the technology. The sun, 93 million miles away, once we develop the technology to access that energy, can become available to everybody, anybody anywhere. And we are just a few years away from that. I do not see any force, any power, government, or administration however reactionary, however anti-future; no movements, however theological or religious, however authoritarian; which can really stop or slow down accelerated change.

A lot of people subscribe to the 100th monkey theory. The idea that there's going to reach a point where there are enough people who evolve into new levels of intelligent functioning and at that point there will be a very sudden change in our reality, and almost instantaneously we reach a new level of evolution.

I think we are at that point right now. The sudden, massive shift, or recontexting of our planet, is already taking place, is already unfolding. It's not something that is going to happen; it's something that's happening today! But because our expectations change also we expect more and it appears to us as if nothing is changing. The fact is that everything is changing. The fact that the planet is now enveloped or embraced by a multitude of satellites has rendered the concept of distance totally irrelevant. That, in itself, is a powerful propellant in the direction of global cohesion. And the fact that we have over a billion people travelling voluntarily across the planet — in the past, only a few thousand people would travel, as a rule, because of economic or social or political pressures.

There is something about the human psyche, at least up until now, that tends to obsessively and unilaterally focus on problems. This kind of self-flagellation which has been with us for aeons, may, in fact, be part of our self-image, may come from guilt, from lack of self-esteem — it certainly comes from lack of perspective. And so we keep focusing on vestigial lingerings. To be sure, they're here. They're real.

I think of both families and tribes as intrinsically Old World. They had their value at one time; they certainly made sure of the perpetuation of the species. But I see us now at a time when tribes and family systems of all kinds — joint families and nuclear families — are really no longer effective in our new world. There are obviously many reasons, but the short answer is that family systems and tribal systems are essentially exclusivist, monopolizing individuals. If we grow up continually re-imprinting our sense of survival on the initial mothering figure — my mother and my child — all too rapidly we grow into my motherland, my fatherland, my people. People are ready to kill and be killed to protect these exclusivities, these tribalisms. More people have been killed for love than for hate.

We are programmed to be very exclusivist territorial creatures. But now, the very programming that may have helped insure our survival, however clumsily and however violently, is threatening our very survival. What we really need, as I see it, is an entirely new code of networks or frameworks that dispose individuals from the very inception of life, the very beginning of life, to relate not to a specific individual or a specific series of individuals, but to relate to everybody. We need to be free of the tendency to fixate on a mothering or parenting figure, or a whole collection of mothering or parenting figures. We need to relate to many people. For that, I've suggested the creation of mobilia, which are highly mobile transglobal fluid frameworks, environments for our kids to grow up in where the program to fixate on specific mothering figures will be phased out. From the very inception of life, babies relate to many caring parents. And, of course, if this can be made global so that you have individuals from all over the planet helping in the sharing of parenting, obviously these kids grow up as global, sharing people. Ten, twenty, thirty years from now they will be effortlessly, automatically, global people. Today you hear more and more about networks and networking and although we do not use words like mobilia, nevertheless a lot of our new homes are like launching platforms. We have shared housing and shared living. So I see us moving in that direction, breaking out of the old authoritarian, exclusivist, territorial kinds of enclaves that have so badly damaged us. Of course, there are a lot of things contributing to that. One is the biological revolution — the fact that we now have a lot of new ways of reproducing life. Twenty years ago, the idea of frozen embryonics or actogenesis, or out-of-the-womb procreations were considered science fiction: and yet, here they are, already happening. So the biological revolution has had an incredible impact in helping to dismantle a lot of the old exclusivist social organization. In addition, the women's movement and the men's movement and the youth movement and the cultural revolution — all these have helped dismantle a lot of the old puritanisms and exclusivities and familialisms. In addition to this, global telecommunications — again, a powerful, powerful impact. So all of these things put together — the new mobility, the new fluidity, the spread of affluence across our planet, the opening of space, the emergence of the new technology — all of these have gone into creating a new environment in which the phase-out of family is accelerating and the phase-in of new, post-family, non-exclusive, reciprocal, all-invasing global kinds of networks are becoming plausible.

I read something about the people who used to work with McLuhan up in Toronto — they've recently been looking at the hydrogen bomb as the ultimate expression of what McLuhan was talking about — as being the medium which forces the global village to acknowledge itself as such. Everybody on the entire globe has to turn around and pay attention to this particular medium and see what it means to them and see how it has to change the way human beings relate to each other. So it's a positive symbol in that it forces — it's the crisis that forces change.

I don't know. I like to think that the forces that are helping to catalyze us from the world of limitations, privations, violence and territoriality to the new world of abundance and immortality and universalism aren't so much the negative forces. It's true we set these up and we keep pointing at them.

People kill to protect these exclusivities, these tribalisms. More people have been killed for love than for hate.

Let's talk about genetics. I know some people who can only see genetics as a terrifying force which...

I don't see anything frightening about genetics. For people who fear it and are anxiety-ridden, obviously everything has the potential for fear. Everything may appear threatening. I'm not impelled by fear. When I look at genetics, the biological revolution, I see wonderment, I see a glorious opening up. I see us moving away from the world of biological constraints and biological closedness to a world of biological openness and multiplicities of options for us to recreate our bodies, to determine our own biological future. I'm really not impelled by fear. I see opportunities. I see challenges.

Viewed from the perspective of the world 40, 50 years from now, we will play back these late 20th century years and realize that genetics did not finally play all that pivotal a role in the evolution of us organisms. To be sure, it's playing an important role, but there are other forces even more radical, even more powerful than genetics. These are, quickly; the evolution of intelligent systems, intelligent machines; the interplay of fusion or interface of the organic and post-organic, to put it as delicately as I can so as not to frighten people off. But I see the incorporation of a lot of non-flesh, non-carbon implants and explants and fusions, and I think that in the coming decades we'll see that area move us even more rapidly into the world of tomorrow. Genetics is a stepping stone in that direction.

Are there going to be actual external devices — not just intelligent machines, but everything from chemical drugs to electric brain stimulation to whatever... things which can actually make human beings all over the globe smarter and more conscious?

I think that what will help make us more intelligent and also better informed and more globally co-involved and more loving and more trusting individuals with a capacity for self-control — in other words, have autonomy over our own mood swings and our own cycles and our own emotions and so forth — will not be chemicals, but a whole lot of non-chemical, electronic, photonic implants. I see those, really, as the wave of the future, not drugs, not chemicals. Remember that the chemical base of life is a very primitive thing. As we evolve to more complex organisms, toward truly trans-universal and immortal beings, we will have to transcend our chemical past. So I am not one who shares any excitement about psychoactive or psychedelic drugs. I see those as part of our past rather than part of our future.

Much of that would be a matter of implants creating, more precisely, some of the same states people are getting from psychedelics.

Yeah, but you see, so long as we're dealing with chemistry, chemicals and the chemical brain, which is what we have today, in the grips of an intelligence that is very fragile, that is still unhappily influenced by a whole lot of environmental forces, a chemical brain that can be aborted at any time, in other words, destroyed, we do not have the flexibility that we aspire to. It is only when we evolve beyond the chemical brain that we will develop into truly wonderful post-human beings capable of trans-living across the universe, capable of reaching out not only across space, but across time. So long as we are in the grips of chemistry, we're still back there in the jungle.

We see the very beginnings of this massive evolution from organic to post-organic. You have people today who are beginning to implant electrodes in the brain to help individuals who suffer from schizophrenia or depression or diabetes and so on. But it's the very beginning. It's just a matter of time before we develop bio-chips, micro-electronic chips that are part organic, part non-organic. We will be able to implant them in our brain in a very non-invasive way and with these we will be able to have a lot of influence over our own brains and also to communicate with others brain to brain, be able to access information in milliseconds, have access to trillions of bits of information quickly, to be able to replicate memories, to be able to transform memories.

I was very fortunate in that I literally grew up around the planet — by the time I was 15 years of age I had lived in about 10-12 countries, a couple of years in Belgium, a couple of years in India, a couple of years in Afghanistan, North Africa, Switzerland, England, and so for me the status quo was always challenged. I never stayed long enough anywhere to remain content with any one area or era. And moving across the planet was like moving across time zones. I saw history unfolding. I saw evolution unfolding. I saw us as a species at different levels of history. I saw us when we were primitive. I saw us when we were in the so-called modern age. I saw us at different levels of history and this engendered historical perspective. Whether that helped contribute to some of my optimism or not, I don't really know. Maybe it was genes. Maybe I inherited some wonderful genes from my parents. But I imagine leading a transglobal life as a child helped a lot.

Beyond that, I'm a person that for reasons unknown to me... my mind is in continuous flash-forward. I automatically flash-forward. When I work somewhere I automatically think "How will all this be 20 years from now? How will this be 50 years from now?" It's an automatic thing. I've always had a fascination with the future, and where this fascination came from, I don't really know. But I do know my mind is always racing forward. And I really feel that.





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Timothy Leary describes the evolution of human thought as Oral, Feudal, Mechanical, and Electronic. Within this context, the computer is visualized as "an electronic micro-mirror which reflects back processed clusters of electronic thought." Leary's newest over-the-edge-and-still-falling project is an amazing demonstration of that concept. *Mind Mirror*, published by Electronic Arts on Apple, IBM, and Commodore computers, is unlike any computer program yet conceived.

In very typical Leary style, the program refuses to be categorized. It is neither a game, an adventure, nor "educational." Instead, it is a very powerful reflector upon our appreciation of our sense of center in life. Are we anchored firmly enough in our own value-judgement system to role-play someone else's? For that matter, how well do we actually know our own system?

To provide a framework for comparing those systems, Leary offers up four Mind Maps: Bio-Energy, Emotional Insight, Mental Abilities, and Social Interaction. Each map consists of two concentric circles divided into eight segments. (They look like pies.) Thus each slice of the pie represents a personal attribute — all equal in value, yet diametrically opposed. For example, on the same map Forceful is opposite Timid, while Proud is opposite Docile.

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As you gain confidence in evaluating your own system, you can take on the challenge of trying to live someone else's. Delving into Life Simulations will be an incredible experience for anyone who tries it. Leary has distilled the essence of role playing, through the adroit use of Psychometrics, into a barrage of images, impressions, and interactions that immerse you totally.

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Roe R. Adams, III

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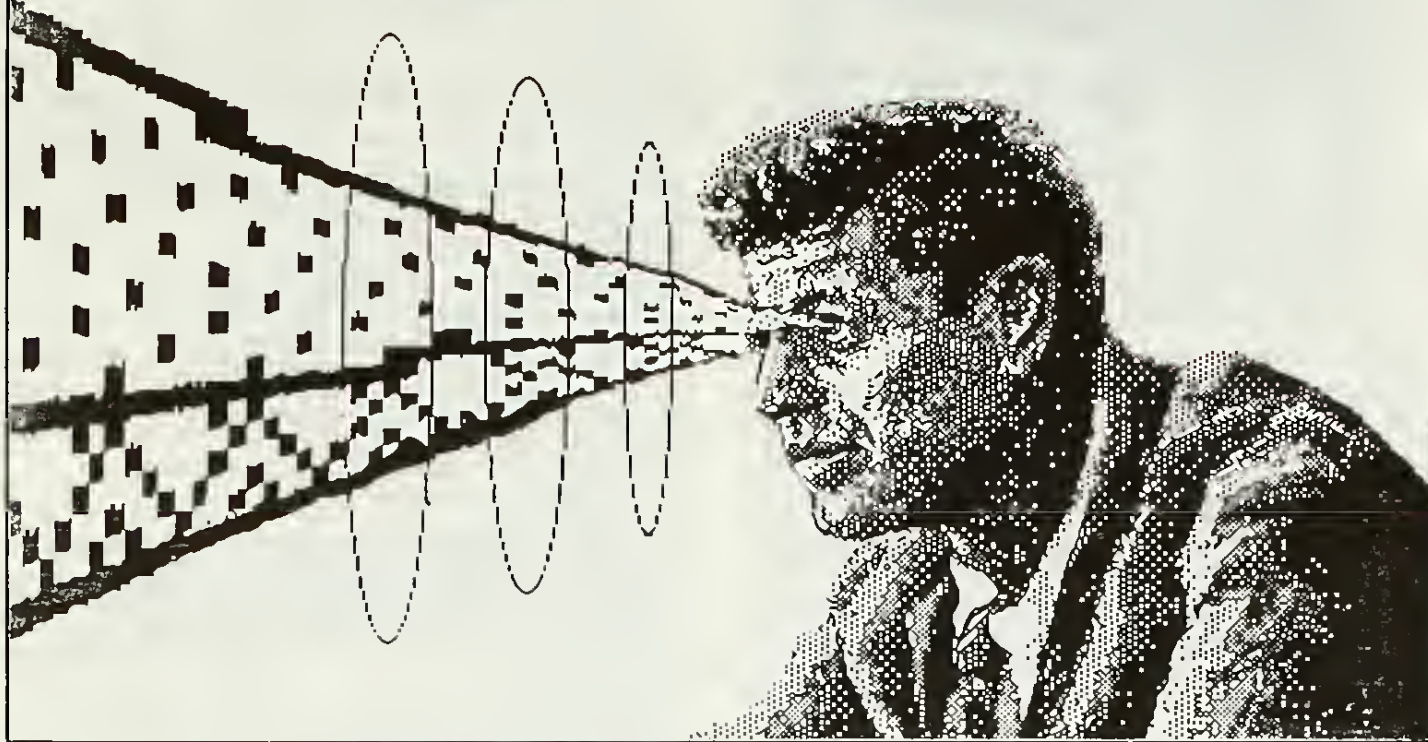
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JFK: AMERICA'S FIRST PSYCHEDELIC PRESIDENT?



1962. The leader of the most powerful nation in the world smiled euphorically. The Cuban missile furrows that had been etched deeply into his forehead relaxed and melted into laugh lines that crinkled as he regarded Mary smiling before the fire. She had dropped her mask of sophistication and lay sprawled on her stomach on the rug, with her legs slowly flutter kicking in the air behind her. Her face glowed luminously, complemented by the snapping flames behind her. Jack laughed in delight. What a perfectly peaceful night. He contemplated the serenity quietly. Tears pricked briefly behind his sensitive eyes. The Viet Nam thing was escalating as planned, but the whole world should know the peace he was feeling. He could make that happen.

Several months before this magic night, Mary Pinchot met Lisa Howard for one of their afternoon strolls along the C & O Canal in Georgetown. As they turned down the towpath, Lisa poked Mary kiddingly, "Well, what happened? What couldn't you tell me over the horn—you with your cloak and dagger paranoia." Mary laughed. "I met with Dr. Leary. I don't think he has any idea what we're really up to...but he's willing to turn us on. And what's better...he'll supply us with what we need."¹

Lisa's eyes widened and she grabbed Mary's arm. "Are we really doing this? This is great! I can't believe it! God what a story! Can you imagine if they found out? The network would shit can me in orbit."

Mary laughed again and Lisa joined her. But when their eyes met after the emotional release of the laughter they both sobered. Both of them were dead serious.

It was the dawn of the 1960's. The CIA had been testing the potential incapacitating uses of psychedelics as tools of war and espionage, and the Harvard Psychedelic Research Project was discovering the educational, therapeutic and religious benefits of psychedelic drugs.

The failure of MONGOOSE in the Bay of Pigs invasion and assassination attempts on Castro had embarrassed the intelligence operations of the presidency. A special group for counter-insurgency was given the task of rebuilding America's image by designing a war, basi-

cally, in reaction to the Cuban fiasco.² Keeping the Cuban situation in mind, eyes turned towards Southeast Asia. President Kennedy announced and carried out the decision of the United States to follow Russia in the atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons. The military geared up for war. The forces of destruction and creation were squaring off.

As the CIA began to crack down on the "once useful" Harvard drug wizards, a circle of women came together in the garage apartment behind the house of Ben Bradlee, a Newsweek journalist and friend of President Kennedy. The garage apartment was the art studio and residence of Bradlee's sister-in-law Mary Pinchot.³

Eight women were sitting and lying about on comfortable pillows in the living room. It was their fourth psychedelic session. At the first two meetings alternate halves of the group had taken LSD. Acting as each other's guides, they discussed and practiced what Mary had learned from Dr. Leary about the guidance of a psychedelic session.⁴ This latest meeting was the second time the whole group had tripped together.

They came out of the session weary, but energized. They felt prepared to take up their task.

"Phase two," said Mary the following day in clipped CIA mimicry.⁵ Several of the women laughed. The wives and lovers of America's top leaders were ready to turn their men on. Lisa and Dorothy, another of the women, were the last to leave. At the door, Lisa turned and flashed a victory sign at Mary, before starting down the stairs.

Jack waved away the concerns of the S.S. men at the door. "I have a right to some privacy, dammit, and I'm good and well going to get it. Now."⁶

As his chauffeur drove him away from the White House, Kennedy leaned back against the seat in relief. His thoughts wandered to the woman he was on his way to visit. Although she would be difficult to live with, as he had remarked more than once to her brother-in-law Ben⁷, she was certainly dynamic. He really liked her. She was hot in bed, too. Up there with Marilyn and Judith.⁸ And she had a way about her. Persuasive. He still couldn't believe she'd gotten him to smoke

marijuana in the White House!⁹ He laughed. Now she'd persuaded him to try her new "wonder love drug".

Mary smiled at Jack as he looked at her in wonderment. "You're feeling pretty high now, aren't you, Jack?"

The president nodded. "A little bit thirsty, too." He looked at her in expectation and she smiled again. "How about some orange juice?"

"That's the absolutely perfect thing. That sounds great. Orange juice!"

Mary rose to her feet and padded into the kitchen. Jack watched her body flow upwards and noticed how catlike she moved as she left the room. The kitchen light was too bright. As she switched it on he flinched and shut his eyes. The pain was gone but he kept his eyes closed. "Technicolor," he thought.

Mary was back with the juice. "Here you go, Jack" He opened his eyes and reached for the glass. "This juice tastes good..." Suddenly oranges became terribly significant. "My God," he said. "The world's insane. We're contemplating madness."

Mary put her arms around him. "Jack, you can change that. You have the power to manifest a vision of peace."

They met each other's eyes. Jack felt great wisdom emanating from within Mary. He smiled. "You told me this was a great aphrodisiac." Mary nodded.

Lisa and Mary got together again several weeks later. It was early February, 1963. The weather was clear but cold. They stopped at a sunny bench and sat down.

"How's it going with Bill?" Mary inquired almost immediately. Lisa grinned.

"Right to the point, aren't you Mary? Things are going great with the Ambassador. How's the President?"

Mary leaned back and looked at the sky. "I think he's changing. Rapidly. He's looking at things in a more holistic fashion. More aware of the inter-connectedness of things, you know?"

Lisa nodded. "Do you think our mad plot for world peace is working?"

Mary laughed. "We're making a dent at any rate."

Things looked wonderful for the feminist co-conspirators in early 1963. Quite a group had built up with "...top people in Washington turning on."¹⁰ The President visited Mary at her art studio several times in this period for further psychedelic sessions and together they explored ways of making Kennedy's new dream of peace a reality.

But then, still early in the year, Mary suffered a frightening set-back. Her brother-in-law's editor, Phil Graham of Newsweek and The Washington Post was suffering from worsening manic-depression and the pain of divorce proceedings. A long time friend of the President, he had in the past "...committed adultery in the company of John Kennedy... often sharing women with him."¹¹ As his mental condition worsened, he and the President became estranged. Finally, enraged and drunken, he mounted a podium at a news convention in Phoenix and announced screaming to a roomful of reporters that "...he was going to tell them exactly who in Washington was sleeping with whom, beginning with President Kennedy."¹² He went on to announce that the President was currently seeing Mary Pinchot at clandestine meetings in her art studio behind Ben Bradlee's house.¹³ What unnerved Mary was that the incident was completely covered up.¹⁴

In a meeting with Dr. Leary she voiced her concern and had a warning for him. "...You should be careful, too. Things are getting edgy in Washington. As we start loosening things up, there's bound to be a reaction. Keep doing what you're doing, but try to keep it low key. If you stir up too many waves, they'll shut you down." She paused for effect. "or worse."¹⁵

Dr. Leary did not follow her advice. As the networks covered the firing of Harvard doctors Alpert and Leary and publicized their Mexican "Hotel Nirvana" psychedelic summer school,¹⁶ Mary, Lisa, Dorothy and the

rest of their group met for a pow-wow at the art studio. Things were going well for them.

"So we're all saying the same thing," Mary said. "We're seeing a definite move towards both a test-ban and detente." The women nodded in agreement. Lisa spoke up. "You know, there's a chance I'll be going to Cuba myself soon. Che Guevara seems willing to meet to discuss the possibilities of acting as an intermediary in negotiating peace terms. I might be able to wangle myself a visa, somehow, and see Castro."

"That would be great!" Mary grinned slyly. "You know, Lisa. I've heard Fidel likes pretty blondes. I wonder how he'd react to a good aphrodisiac?"

The women laughed. "You know," said Lisa, "I think Ambassador Attwood wouldn't mind if we could negotiate the peace the President has been urging."

June 10, 1963. Face alight with hope, the President looked out at the sea of intelligent young graduating seniors at the American University in Washington, D.C. Here were the future knights of his Camelot. In a powerful and now famous speech for peace he stated that "...every thoughtful citizen who despairs of war and wishes to bring peace, should begin by looking inward..."¹⁷ War, he said "...makes no sense in an age when the deadly poisons produced by a nuclear exchange would be carried by wind and water and soil and seed to the far corners of the globe and to generations yet unborn."¹⁸ He committed himself to work for a test-ban treaty which would not, he said, "...be a substitute for disarmament, but...will help us achieve it."¹⁹ In reference to the Soviet Union and its allies he stated, "...if we cannot end now our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity...We all breathe the same air."²⁰

The women were elated. As it turns out, elements of the CIA—tied to the underworld and rabid anti-Castro extremists—were not so pleased.²¹ Unaware of the extent of this right-wing displeasure, the Pinchot Group continued with their plans.

By mid-1963 these plans began to show definite signs of coming to fruition. Lisa Howard did meet secretly with Che Guevara and they discussed peace terms between the United States and Cuba.²² Succeeding in "wangling her visa," she spent about a month in Cuba and met with Castro several times. He was indeed attracted to the lovely blonde woman and consented to a 45 minute taped interview with her which aired on ABC. Also together, they set up "...the arrangements for Attwood to go to Cuba and conduct preliminary talks preparatory to a Kennedy-Castro meeting."²³

September 1963. Things began to go seriously awry. Lisa and Mary met for another talk. Both were near panic.

"We're in trouble, Lisa." Mary's voice shook. "It was a mistake to recruit the latest wife. She finked. I got a telephone call. The proverbial shit's hitting the fan."

"Have you talked to John?" Lisa inquired.

"Yes. He's nervous, too. He cancelled a session."

"Did you discuss what I should do?"

"John says to keep on—your work with Castro is too important right now to pull back from. I may have to disappear. Lay low for awhile. I don't know."

"Where will you go?"

"I was thinking of heading up to talk about that with Timothy. I'm not sure. Things are weird. Have you heard? Dorothy tells me that Aldous Huxley's dying."

"Oh, God." Lisa looked at Mary in despair. "Where are all our plans now?"

"They just might be blowing up in our faces."

Late that afternoon, a near hysterical Mary met Timothy in Millbrook. Informing him of her troubles, she asked if he could hide her for a while if necessary. He agreed. She had another warning for him. "...You must be very careful now, Timothy. Don't make any waves. No publicity. I'm afraid for you. I'm afraid for all of us."²⁴

November. Lisa Howard was in the process of arrang-

ing a conference between Bobby Kennedy and Che Guevara.²⁵ "... On November 19th, Presidential aide McGeorge Bundy, who was acting as an intermediary in the secret discussions, told Ambassador Attwood that the President wanted to discuss his plans for a Cuban-American detente in depth with him right after 'a brief trip to Dallas.'" ²⁶

Three days later the President was dead. On November 23rd, Fidel Castro said that Kennedy's assassination was the work of "elements in the U.S. opposed to peace."²⁷ His remarks were labeled as propaganda.

December 1st, 1963. Mary called Dr. Leary in almost unintelligible grief. She sobbed into the phone. "They couldn't control him anymore. He was changing too fast... They've covered everything up. I gotta come see you. I'm afraid. Be careful."²⁸ Suddenly there was a dial tone. The doctor replaced the phone slowly, regarding it with concern.

The group met secretly one last time. It was agreed that there was no choice but to disband. It was a solemn meeting and not all of the women were ready to accept failure. The two newswomen met each other's eyes. "This will all come out, you know." Dorothy announced. Lisa nodded. "I'm not finished yet!"

It was the dawn of the 1960's. The CIA had been testing the potential incapacitating uses of psychedelics as tools of war and espionage, and the Harvard Psychedelic Research Project was discovering the educational, therapeutic and religious benefits of psychedelic drugs.

Almost a year later Mary Pinchot walked the familiar towpath by the canal. It was early afternoon and Mary stopped to watch a bird wing overhead. There was a step not far behind her. She turned. A man regarded her silently. Her eyes widened and then narrowed. "You have no idea what you're facing. You can't change what we've started." He shot her in the chest. Mary left her body and stood for a moment at her assassin's side. He fired at her body's head twice. She felt sorry for him briefly, and then followed the bird across the water. After her death, her apartment was searched and her diary removed for "disposal" by the CIA chief of counterintelligence, James Angleton.²⁹ Her murder "officially" has never been solved.

A year later, Lisa Howard died under suspicious circumstances. Her death was attributed to suicide. Supposedly she took one hundred phenobarbitols at mid-day in a parking lot where she was found wandering in a daze. She had been involved in a dispute with ABC and had been fired because she had "chosen to participate publicly in partisan political activity contrary to long-established ABC news policy."³⁰ Suspicions about her death "...if ever substantiated...would make her the second female news reporter (after Dorothy Kilgallen) whom assassination critics suspect was silenced because of her knowledge of the assassination."³¹

Before her death, Lisa turned against Robert Kennedy, who was running for the U.S. Senate in New York. At a group meeting she organized with Gore

Vidal in support of the incumbent Senator Keating, Bobby was described as "the very antithesis of his brother... ruthless, reactionary, and dangerously authoritarian." Explaining her reasons for forming the group she said, "if you feel strongly about something like this you can't remain silent. You have to show courage and stand up and be counted." After ABC fired her she continued her "partisan political activity" remarking in a debate over Robert Kennedy that "Brothers are not necessarily the same... There was Cain and Abel."³² An interesting comparison.

In the wake of the Kennedy assassination there have been many more deaths than those of Mary Pinchot, Lisa Howard, and Dorothy Kilgallen. District Attorney Jim Garrison, of New Orleans, who investigated the Kennedy assassination said that "witnesses in this case do have a habit of dying at the most inconvenient times...a London insurance firm has prepared an actuarial chart on the likelihood of 20 of the people involved in this case dying within three years of the assassination and found the odds 30 trillion to one."³³

There can be little doubt that the Kennedy assassination occurred because of the young President's dream of peace. He had come to believe that his dream was possible and was killed because he took steps to bring it about.

After his murder, things quickly began to change. President Johnson's foreign policy decisions were diametrically opposed to the plans Kennedy and Mary discussed before the fire.

The nation was plunged deeper into cold war paranoia. The war in Southeast Asia worsened, and an idiotic reactionary depression ensued resulting in the Pentagon and Watergate scandals and the current dangerously unhealthy conservatism we must counter today.

"...step back from the shadows of war
seek out the way of peace."

—JFK, July 26, 1963

1. *Flashbacks* p. 154-156 Timothy Leary J. P. Tarcher Inc. Los Angeles 1983

2. *Katherine The Great* p. 159 Deborah Davis Harcourt Brace Jovanovich N.Y. and London 1979

3. *Ibid.* p. 224

4. *Flashbacks* p. 128-130, 154-156

5. *Conversations With Kennedy* p. 34 Benjamin C. Bradley W. W. Norton Eco. N.Y. 1975 (Mary would easily mimic CIA tones: her ex-husband was Cord Meyer, CIA official, also see *Katherine The Great* p. 227-230)

6. *JFK: The Man And The Myth* p. 502 Victor Lasky The McMillan Co. N.Y., N.Y. 1963

7. *Conversations With Kennedy* p. 54

8. *Conspiracy* p. 277 Anthony Summers McGraw-Hill Book Co. N.Y. 1969 (The affair with Marilyn Monroe was documented in *Goddess* and elsewhere.)

9. *S.F. Chronicle* 2-23-76 p.1, 16

10. *Flashbacks* p.154

11. *Katherine The Great* p. 150

12. *Ibid.* p. 163-164

13. *Ibid.* p. 164

14. *Flashbacks* p. 162

15. *Ibid.* p. 162-163

16. *Ibid.* p. 166

17. June 10 Speech in *Kennedy Reader*, p. 123 Jay David Bobbs Merrill Co. Inc. 1967

18. *Ibid.* p. 122

19. *Ibid.* p. 128

20. *Ibid.* p. 125-126

21. *Playboy* 10-67 vol.14 no.10 p.157

22. *The Kennedy Conspiracy* p. 255-256

23. *Ibid.* p. 258

24. *Flashbacks* p. 191

25. *Playboy* p. 156

26. *Ibid.* p. 157

27. *Ibid.*

28. *Flashbacks* p. 194

29. *S.F. Chronicle* 2-23-76 p.1, 16

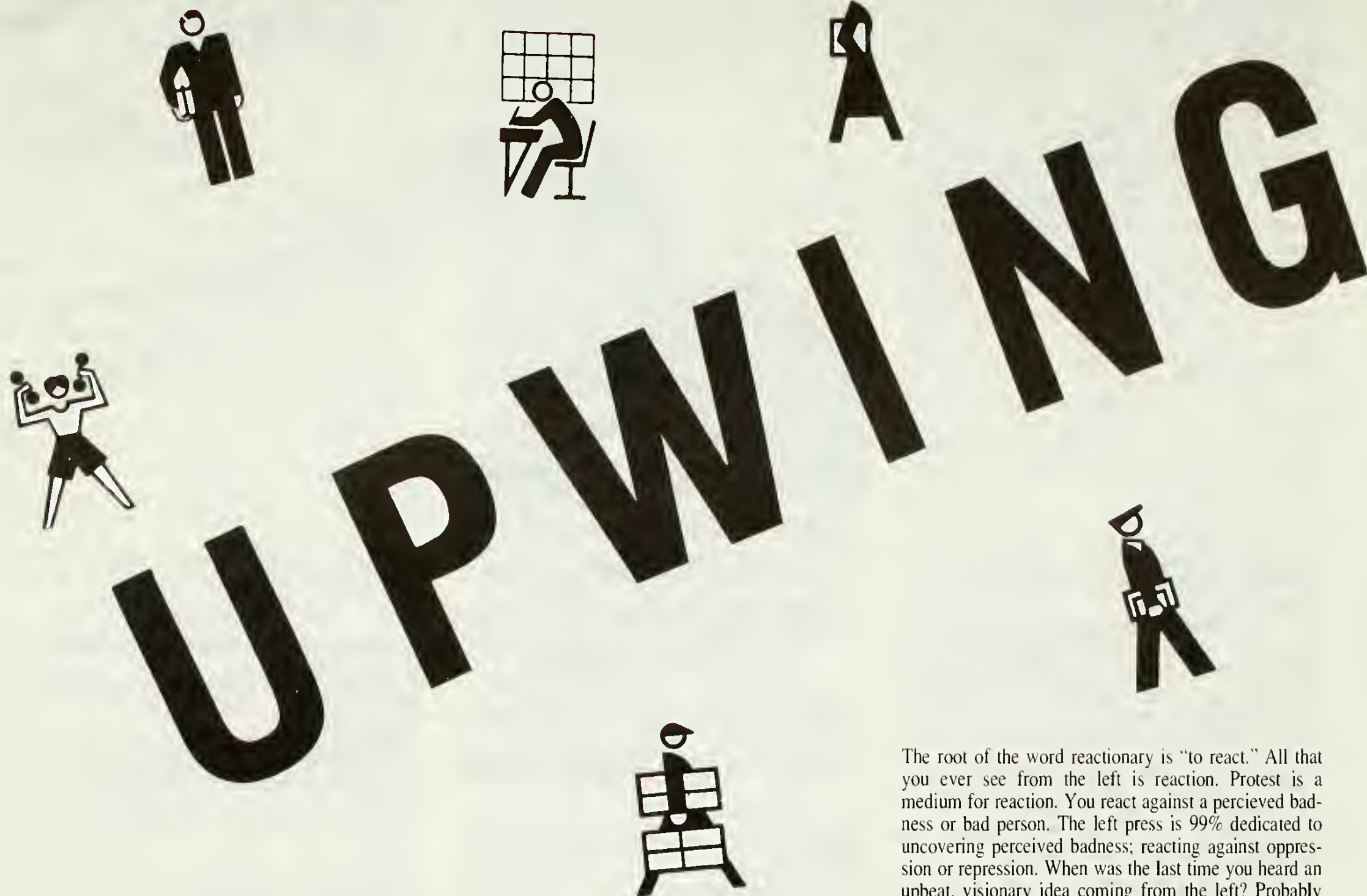
30. *The Kennedy Conspiracy* p. 259

31. *Ibid.* p. 260

32. *Ibid.* p. 259

33. *Playboy* p. 162

LOOKING FOR SOLUTIONS IN THE SOLUTION BOX



The Six Major Problems With The Left

1) Any philosophy which equates success with selling out is axiomatically doomed for failure.

2) Americans are confused by two contradictory messages which are put out by society-at-large. The first is the old-line protestant message that we are not here for our own pleasure; we are not here to indulge ourselves, to feel good, have fun, experience sexual ecstasy and somatic bliss. Good is defined by selflessness and self-denial, sacrifice for the general good. The second message is the newer, consumer-oriented message that we are here for pleasure and self-indulgence. "You deserve it! Go for it! Indulge! Only the best!"

The left lines up on the side of selflessness and sacrifice for the general good. ("It is because we consume that we create wickedness throughout the world.") Self-indulgence is bourgeois. Yuppies are to be sneered at. Poverty is honorable. "You don't deserve it. You deserve to feel guilty for having when others have not." Is this the message to capture the desire and imagination of the future?

3) The left is reactionary. Reactionary does not mean pro-capitalist. Progressive does not mean pro-socialist.

The root of the word reactionary is "to react." All that you ever see from the left is reaction. Protest is a medium for reaction. You react against a perceived badness or bad person. The left press is 99% dedicated to uncovering perceived badness; reacting against oppression or repression. When was the last time you heard an upbeat, visionary idea coming from the left? Probably before Chicago 1968. The left has been reacting to perceived badness ever since.

Ken Kesey nailed it back in the early 70's when he expressed feelings that the radical movement (which was strong at that time) was "looking for solutions in the problem box."

"We shouldn't go into space until we solve our problems here." "What relevance do your psychedelic visions have to a starving peasant with rickets in East Timor?" In reality, of course, the solutions are out there where free intelligence and free imagination can uncover new resources; whether "there" be in inner space, outer space, or in pragmatic day-to-day earth reality where practical inventiveness can create technologies to access and distribute greater wealth.

4) The left (and the liberals, neo-liberals, Carterite moderates, etc.) handed America over to the far-right by embracing a philosophy of entropy, the "era of limitations", *Muddling Towards Frugality*, *Small Is Beautiful*. No wonder Ronald Reagan captured the youth vote with his message of optimism, abundance over scarcity, feeling good about yourself and getting the government off of our backs. (Let me make it clear that I voted against Reagan in both elections and consider him a dangerous pawn of the military/industrial shakedown of



The American left is dying. Let it! Upwingers are gearing up to challenge the new right by moving bravely into the future and defining it as flexibly and humanely as possible. The battle to define the future is not a battle between a bunch of fearful, over-protective, morally priggish, self-righteous, matronly Jeremy Rifkin/Ralph Nader-types and dumb yahoo cowboys like Ronald Reagan and The Hoover Institute. Through imagination, courage and flexibility we can seize the extraordinary technology at our fingertips and construct a reality of abundance and leisure, self-fulfillment, play, adventure, limitless space, limitless time, limitless pleasure.

ERS



American resources. It is precisely the fact that the left and the liberals allowed Reagan to capture the "upwinger" message which so angers me.)

Relatedly, the left has manifested an anti-technological bias often bordering on neo-Luddism. This is the source of the "era of limitations" philosophy. Without the creation of new technologies, we will never uncover and/or create new wealth. What we are left with is the redistribution of a frighteningly diminishing resource bank.

5) In manifesting an attitude of fear and suspicion towards our national media, the left handed over the national mythology and image-making to the Rambo alliance.

Yes, de-centralized community organizing is an important problem-solving tool. But we also live in McLuhan's global village and putting exciting, captivating, progressive and visionary images out into the information environment is the only way to slow down the glamourization of stupidity and militarism. I'm not saying that progressives can manipulate or subvert the media; only that we can compete consciously and intelligently within the information environment and gain more than we can by copping a holier-than-thou attitude.

6) In failing to acknowledge or recognize that socialism is essentially a more conservative philosophy than capitalism, the left has obscured some of its legitimate points.

Let's recognize the fact that western capitalism offers the dynamic, dangerous, unpredictable, uncontrollable, anarchic environment in which asocial experimentation, risk, and individual mutation thrives.

Socialism's legitimate appeal is in its safety and predictability; the nurturing aspect, a society seeing to it that everybody is taken care of and that everything is o.k.

Upwingers believe we can have all of this and more... which brings us to part 2.

PART 2

The Six Major Points Of The Upwingers

1) Intelligence or contelligence-increase is the main issue.

Step outside your local reality and check out your species from a dispassionate evolutionary perspective.

You want to see what this particular decoder and carrier of information knows and what it is capable of. Well, the human being can fly at 25,000 m.p.h., can escape the earth's biosphere and carry out technological experiments in space, can use natural and invisible forces to heal diseases and affect natural phenomena, can store vast amounts of information on a silicon chip, can build an instrument capable of seeing to the beginning of the universe, can decode and begin to manipulate the DNA life-code, can construct elegant mathematical structures which are simulations of our universe, can comprehend and manipulate at the atomic and sub-atomic level, can talk to another human being anywhere else on the planet within moments... ad infinitum.

Now, draw in closely and look at the typical representative of the species. She doesn't have any of these capabilities and comprehensions. (I'm not being elitist here. I don't have these capacities either.) The fact is, the average American doesn't comprehend the basic underlying principals behind the technology which he uses on a day-to-day basis.

Hierarchy will not come to an end until the human individual can access the knowledge, capabilities and comprehensions currently available to the human species as a whole. Upwingers believe that this can be done by acknowledging that the single technology which can best be used to bring about a human (or post-human) society of abundance, freedom and novelty is the inner technology; the brain, the mind and the nervous system. We must learn how to operate this technology! Imagine the wealth that will be created, the novelty and pleasure that will result from billions of human beings being able to access levels of contelligence which are currently unavailable to even the brightest representative. All other issues are subsumed by contelligence-increase.

2) The synecdoche of Upwinger politics is flexibility. We make as few assumptions as is humanly possible. The only way to solve a real pragmatic problem is to take in relevant information and then dispassionately choose action which will get you the result you want as precisely as you possibly can. In order to do that, you must have no ideological axe to grind; no belief system. Nobody with a rigid belief system really wants to solve problems. What they want is to have their belief system proven correct.

3) While we strive for maximum flexibility, we are not nihilists. We do have two essential goals. These are: a) to bring about maximum material abundance for all human beings, and b) to maximize individual freedom.

4) Upwingers accept all new discoveries and developments as new energies which have some valid purpose. As an example, atomic fission may never be safe to use on earth. In space, it can be safely used to propel vehicles at rapid speeds across the galaxy. It is a basic alchemical principle that any new energy received must be integrated into the whole system or the system itself must be changed or expanded to allow the integration.

Once you start perceiving things this way, you begin to delight in allowing these new energies to force you into opening up new possibilities. When you find a way of constructively channeling a new energy, you create wealth and novelty for everybody.

5) Upwingers are in it for themselves! We want abundance, leisure, personal freedom, better sex, better brains, better highs, more novelty, more fun, space travel, time travel, more beautiful and astounding environments, more pleasure, funnier and happier daily lives, for ourselves! We abhor piety, self-righteousness, self-sacrifice, guilt, martyrdom, denial and all other forms of psychological masochism handed down to us from the patriarchal dark ages of Christianity - Judaism - Marxism - Mohammedism - Hinduism - Buddhism - ad nauseum.

6) Upwingers believe in acceding to everyone's desires. We believe that behind every political belief system and every individual point of view, there are underlying desires which are legitimate and can and should be met. We support the concept of "syncon" or synergistic conferencing, originated by futurist visionary Barbara Marx Hubbard. This is a process whereby individuals of widely varying viewpoints and interest group get together to solve problems under the agreement that they will not emerge until they can reach a conclusion, or a set of conclusions, which are satisfactory for everybody. Experiments with this have been extraordinarily successful.

Upwingers actually believe that world peace can be attained, in time, by acknowledging the legitimacy of the desires of most people and striving for solutions which are satisfactory to everyone while at the same time creating new resources and new eco-niches and thereby creating new desires and new possibilities for acceding to desires.

Upwingers are serious about taking charge of America. Admittedly, yours truly, R.U.Sirius is not about to be taken too seriously as a threat to the Republican Party (thank goddess!) in the near future. However, the politics of flexibility and evolution are beginning to emerge. Let's face it. The baby boom generation has not been offered a politics which reflects its collective experience and its desires. Although they are disillusioned with the radicalism of the late 60's and the liberalism of the 70's, they have not become enthusiastic Republicans. Most have remained independents, the tendency being towards economic conservatism and cultural liberalism. The Reagan administration is beginning to scare these people as more virulent borderline fascist strains of the right emerge from the Republican closet. The country is clearly unenthusiastic about the recent saber-rattling directed at Libya and Nicaragua, the bombing of abortion clinics, the apologia for pro-western fascists by Jerry Falwell, and the Orwellian urinalysis being proposed to test all government workers for drug use.

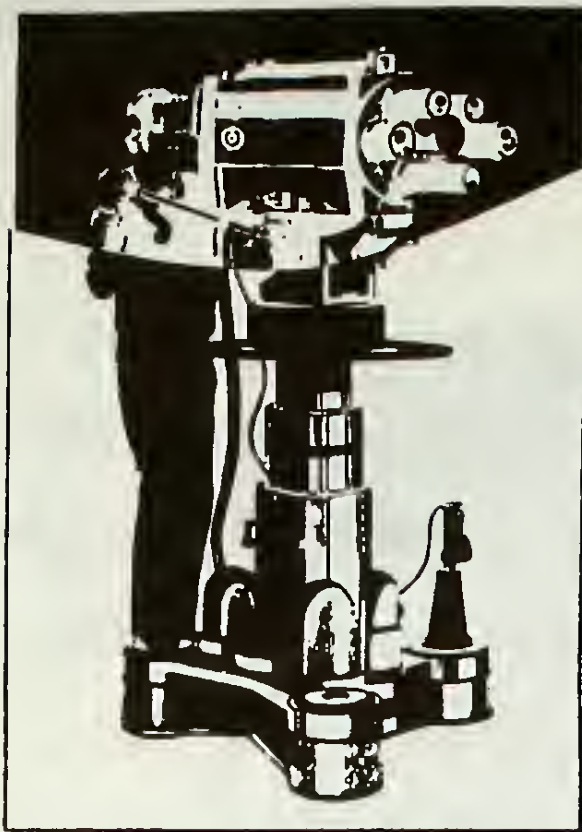
The bottom line is that the so-called economic recovery we've been hearing so much about under the Reagan administration is table crumbs compared to the potential wealth that currently exists and which we could begin to access by adopting an all-win economic strategy of the sort proposed by Buckminster Fuller and others.

The nation desperately needs a politics to capture and reflect the imaginations of the post-Hiroshima generations. I invite all readers to help form an Upwingers organization/think tank which will allow individuals to begin communicating Upwinger ideas to the American people. If you are interested contact: R.U. Sirius c/o High Frontiers Magazine.



WEIRD SCENES INSIDE THE GOLD MINE





Michael Nesmith: A Monkees Evolution

All has been in a state of disarray at High Frontiers headquarters since we received the news over the AP wire—the Monkees, minus Michael Nesmith, have reunited for a summer concert tour. When one retrospects on those fabulous sixties, one naturally remembers the protests, the drugs, and of course, *THE MONKEES!*

Nancy Druid and Matt Amphetamine were in the front office furiously fighting over who would get the comps to the August 31 concert at Great America in Santa Clara, a long time favorite recreation site of the High Frontiers staff. Meanwhile, Editor-in-Chief R.U. Sirius was on the phone, hot on the trail of Nesmith. Why no Nesmith? What was the real smut behind the absence of Nesmith? Was it the money? Was it the billing? Enquiring minds wanted to know.

Nesmith wasn't talking. However, we did acquire the following from Eric Lefkowitz, author of *The Monkee's Tale*, a biography of *The Monkees*.

ON THE MONKEES: No Bad Feelings

There is a common misconception out there that I have some sort of a bad feeling about the Monkees. The only bad feeling I have about the Monkees is the stupid questions I get asked about it, questions that are gross misinformation, questions that are unoriginal and don't have any concept of what the Monkees were all about. But as far as the Monkees experience in my life, I had a good time. As far as Monkees' fans, I like 'em quite a bit. There's sort of a deference there, kind of a memory that was fun for them when they were nine. "Hey, I remember you. Thanks a lot for what you did during those times and I know you had a hard time with the press, and all that, but who cares. It was fun for me and it was fun for Tina across the street because we both had coathangers with Monkees faces on 'em and we giggled, so we had a good time." That's a nice thing. It's kind of a tender and benevolent part of everyone's childhood.

ON HEAD:

We Were On A Roll

Head was the most bona fide example of the Monkees' collective thinking, because it was Bert and Bob and Jack and the four of us in Ojai talking into a tape recorder, and that ultimately became the script. The seven of us sat there and wrote *Head*. Essentially, if you want to say whose vision it was, it was Jack Nicholson's. Jack is gifted, beyond world class. He's one of the greats. He has always had a remarkably creative, astute thinking mechanism and impeccable sense of taste. But it was a fabulously creative idea that came out of just hanging out in Ojai and driving golf carts in the middle of the night. It was an intense soul-searching weekend. *Head* wasn't the Monkees' swan song, suicide, goodbye, it was all over. That's not it at all. We were on a roll. We were at the top of our form, the height of our popularity, had a network television show cooking, and now a motion picture deal. This would be the movie that would set us apart, make us a valid member of the community. "We know where it's at and we also know how to make films, so if you'll come and let us boogie across the silver screen, we'll just make a series of Monkees movies instead of a series of television shows." That was the foundation for that notion.

ON THE T.V. SHOW:

A Synergy Of Film And Music

I always maintained from the beginning that the driver of that whole Monkees phenomenon was the television show, period, pure and simple. I mean, all you have to do is sit down and listen to a Beatles record and sit down and listen to a Monkees record, and the Beatles record is breathtaking in its inspiration and the Monkees record is flat and uninteresting. But you combine that music with a visual image of some inspiration—which was the result of Jim Frawley and Bob Rafelson... they became supercharged, just turned into a whole different ballgame.

There was a type of seed that was planted that was beyond the obvious manufactured image, that was beyond "let's exploit the Beatles phenomenon," that was beyond "let's put the Beatles on commercial television," and it had to do with contemporary music and film of the time. It was a marriage of it. It came together in a unique and wonderful way, and in the future people will look back on that. When you talk about the Beatles, you talk about a sociological phenomenon. With the Beatles, you talk about a sort of magic coming together plugged into a spot in the consciousness that had to do with the Vietnam War, that had to do with the death of Kennedy, that had to do with a disenfranchised generation, that had to do with dope, that had to do with the concept of omnipotent love and all these other ideas that were new. The Monkees came together around an artistic base that was utterly hidden by those times, where it was invisible to anybody except the people that were in it. The potency of the synergy of those two mediums, of film and music, were coming together quite independent of all the other attendant phenomena.

ON THE NEW TECHNOLOGY:

The Biotechnical Tree Self-Prunes

Well, I don't think of myself as having wrought the video revolution, number one. What I think about it is that it's a natural evolution. It just makes perfect sense. What's gonna be interesting is watching the dog wag the tail. And the tail, of course, is the distribution end. And that whole distribution end will now begin to change in a dramatic and remarkable and really fun way over the next ten years.

In video, what's gonna happen is we're gonna move into a distribution system unlike anything anybody has ever suspected before, which is gonna be all electronic distribution. You're not gonna buy a record, you're gonna download it. Right now we're up against some hardware technology problems, but not big problems. They're about the same magnitude of the problem going from the 78 to the LP was. Essentially it has to do with mass storage. The amount of storage it takes to digitize a video image is bigger now than is practical for any kind of usage. But that's one of the little things that'll change.

And when that storage system gets into place that means that you are gonna be able to have in your home, essentially, a storage bin that will hold huge amounts of information. We already have one in the disk right now... CD or laserdisk. Big storage carrier. We'll have things that are bigger than that. What'll happen is that we'll hook up, whether through microwave satellites, wireless, or through land lines, hard-wired bits of the new fiber optics, and you'll go into a database which is dedicated essentially to entertainment, and you will pull down, for a fee, your video record and download it into your own electronic library, and that will be the distribution of the future. It won't be very expensive. This is no Isaac Asimov here. This is going on as I speak. I can, right now, with a telephone line, download all types of information, from a huge record library, to interfacing with a big computer to work out a problem for me, to an encyclopedia. I can just grab it up and pull it up, check my spelling where I want. I can't store it someplace right now and have it, like I would have something. The electronic library is where we're going.

I can see an orderly evolutionary progress that is mutually interdependent, harmonious, interactive. I don't see some big technological juggernaut coming through and running roughshod over the values and treasures of humankind. That's not happening. What's happening is we're getting tools, and you have to be very careful that you don't fall into this notion of computers and electronics and downloading and all the bizarre new vocabulary as being a machine to which rhythms we must reconcile ourselves, but in fact they're tools which enhance our own powers. So the power of the individual is just becoming larger and larger and more enhanced.

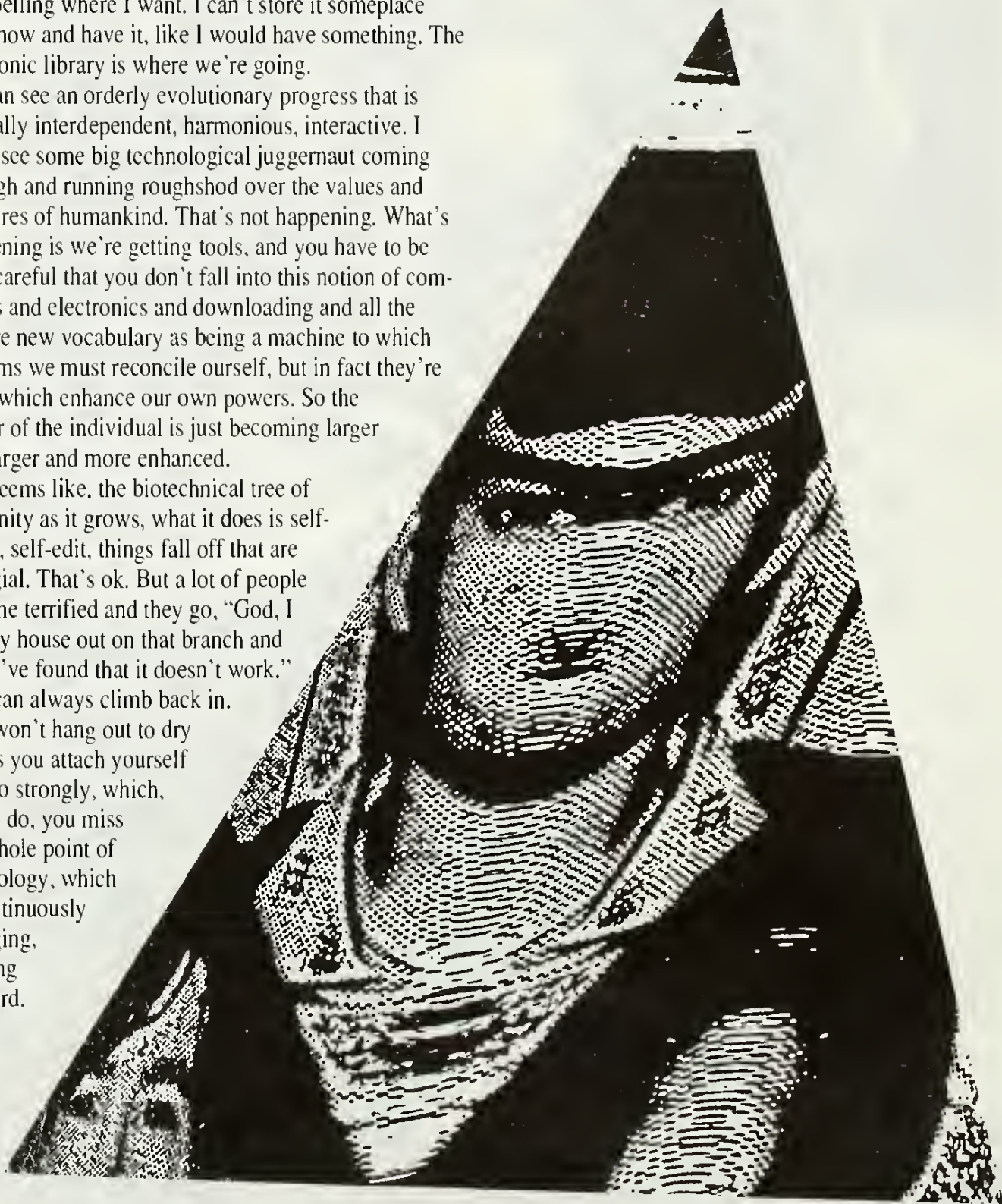
It seems like, the biotechnical tree of humanity as it grows, what it does is self-prune, self-edit, things fall off that are vestigial. That's ok. But a lot of people become terrified and they go, "God, I put my house out on that branch and now I've found that it doesn't work." You can always climb back in. You won't hang out to dry unless you attach yourself to it so strongly, which, if you do, you miss the whole point of technology, which is continuously changing, moving forward.

I can see an orderly evolutionary progress that is mutually interdependent, harmonious, and interactive.

Nesmith recently produced a 13-week mini-series for NBC called Television Parts and has made available for home video Television Parts Home Companion. As well as working on numerous video art projects, Nesmith distributes alternative home video art through his company Pacific Arts Video in Los Angeles.

The Monkees' Tale by Eric Lefkowitz is published by Last Gasp Publishing, SF.

Originally printed in Monkee Business.



Putting The Pain Back Into Psychedelic Music

an interview with Jello Biafra



HIGH FRONTIERS: *Is punk dead?*

JELLO BIAFRA: Well, it won't be dead until something more dangerous replaces it. I mean, in a way it may even be bad that it will never die. Guy Lombardo played his music till he died. I can easily see Wadi of The Exploited at 60 years old, going around supper clubs with the same black t-shirt and the same mohawk, singing the same song in the same way.

What are you guys going to do when you're 60 years old?

Oh, I have no idea. Maybe we'll dance... set ourselves on fire for a living.

What role do you think actual psychedelics should, or do, play in the performing or enjoyment of this type of music?

Keep in mind that some of the people who took that the furthest and have remained interesting the longest are Frank Zappa and Captain Beefheart and both of them are militantly anti-drug. I think that with any drug, it's good to experiment with it rather than depend on it. In other words, do it two or three or four times and then get rid of it.

I did acid recently with the Butthole Surfers and that was pretty interesting. People ask me what their political views are. Well, I just gotta flashback to acid in the middle of the night on the beach with the Butthole Surfers, with Paul, their guitarist, looking up from the bottom of the sand dune... "You know what would be the ultimate picture disc, Biafra? Get a bowl of big old logs with the corn and everything, so when you put the record on, the big logs go spinning around but they never go down the pipe."

"... the big logs go spinning around but they never go down the pipe."

I'm real surprised to see you at all these psychedelic shows because I never thought of the Dead Kennedys as psychedelic.

That element has always been there. Our guitarist saw Syd Barrett. I think that was his first concert, Pink Floyd with Syd Barrett in Winterland. His dad took him when he was real young. So I think it's mostly just been our own form. In other words, trying to make it into something completely new as best we can.

The purpose of Frankenchrist (the Dead Kennedys latest LP) is to bring the pain back into psychedelic music. What do you mean by that?

I mean, some of the original psychedelic people, like The 13th Floor Elevators or even Pink Floyd, there was almost like an inferno of pain going on in amongst the different forms of beauty. The first Red Crayola is a good example of that, too.

I remember when I first saw you in Boston. The kids were crowding the stage. And you said, "Move back and show that you can control yourselves and don't need some fascist bouncer to control you." The crowd surged back like a wave. I almost got knocked over. People are thankful when you actually give them most responsibility rather than just policing them at a show. They have more self confidence. I like to do that. The problem with big arena rock shows is... a lot of the arena metal shows are starting to resemble Leni Riefenstahl's Triumph of the Will. The mass shaking of fists in the air, the macho supremacy trip. To a degree, I think that's on purpose since the corporate big time record company music is designed as a mind control to make people as stupid as possible.

The preceding conversation with Jello Biafra took place at a Morlocks/Yard Trauma show in S.F. and was performed by Kim Simon. *High Frontiers* later heard from Jello that he wanted to conduct a further interview to expand upon his ideas about psychedelic drugs, psychedelic music, the sixties and other subjects. *High Frontiers* is planning on conducting a further exchange with Jello and printing extensive excerpts in a future issue.

Meanwhile, Jello was recently arrested for "distributing harmful material to minors" on the basis of a poster, *Penis Landscapes* by H. R. Geiger, which was included in *Frankenchrist*. The Dead Kennedys have been singled out for attack by elements of the religious right and deserve the support of all who are interested in preserving individual freedom in the face of the current fascist juggernaut. For information write to: *No More Censorship*, P.O. Box 11458, San Francisco, CA 94101.

What, you've never heard of Eric and the Flying Tarantulas?" Harold, a Flying Tarantula, sounded properly scornful.

I had to confess, shamefacedly, that I was not up on the local rock scene. Too many misspent hours in mouldering library stacks. I was a medical anthropologist, I explained—looking at animal medicines. No, not veterinary medicines, but medicines derived from the faunal realm. "At the moment, I'm working on sting-ray venom and its ritual use by the Maya. 'Bygone Trygons Of The Ancient Maya', I'm going to call it."

Harold looked unimpressed. "We're into tarantula venom ourselves," he said jadedly.

"Really?!" I said, suddenly rapt with fascination. It was a blue moon—the second full moon in September—and I had just worked my way backstage at the Nina Hagen concert, narrowly escaping an attempted rape by a paraplegic in the lobby, and I was prepared to believe anything. "Are you really?" I pressed for details. "How do you do it?"

They smoked it, it transpired. On joints. Just before they performed.

Harold expanded with gusto on his favorite theme while Eric looked detached and slightly supercilious. Eric, it appeared, did *not* do tarantula venom. It was "Eric *and* the Flying Tarantulas", he pointed out pedantically. He cultivated an air of precocious world weariness and terminal ennui. The Tarantulas, it was explained to me, came and went, in shifts or cycles. They had periods of dormancy where presumably they recharged their shattered nervous systems but eventually resurfaced as dithyrambic as ever.

I peered at Harold, who looked normal enough, though ever-so-slightly bug-eyed. He had about him an aging whiz-kid quality. Zoey Glass. One of the Smart Patrol.

"What about *Latrodectus mactans*?" I asked, thinking to score a point or two. Black widow poison was one I knew.

"Oh, that's a complete bummer," he said. "Don't even try it."

Harold was a bio-chem student and worked in the lab. Tarantula venom was definitely an exotic. It was not in the Sigma catalog, though they had everything from *Bufo Marinus* to *Naja naja*. They were heavy on the snake venoms but spider venoms are still largely terra incognita even for the practicing venomologist. "But how do you get it?" I pressed. Here they hedged uncomfortably and exchanged sidelong glances. "Well, if you're a bona fide researcher they can get it for you as an 'accommodation'," Harold allowed. "But they're going to scrutinize you..."

Just then R. U. Sirius and Lord Nose emerged from La Hagen's dressingroom. "Boy, she's really out there," said Lord Nose. "I liked the bit about the Space Brothers and the Music of the Spheres" said R.U. "Guess what?!" I exclaimed breathlessly. "This is Eric and one of the Flying Tarantulas—they're into tarantula venom and I'm going to write them up for the next issue!"

"Shhhh! Don't tell anyone!" said Harold, looking nervously over at the other boardroom table full of reporters and photographers covering Nina's "Ecstasy Drive '85" (next stop Rio). "It's extremely illegal and we'll get into trouble."

"But how am I going to get you all this great publicity?" That was a real stumbler, and as Eric and I mooted over what could be revealed to the vulgar herd, Harold suddenly interjected "Ever done any cow-tipping?"

"What's cow-tipping?" we all asked in unison. Harold came from Minnesota, where it was great sport. "You know how cows sleep standing up?" he said. "Well you go out in a pasture where they're standing around sleeping and give 'em a little nudge (he demonstrated) and they fall over. Just like dominoes." He chortled wickedly. R.U. and Lord Nose exchanged one long telling glance.



TARA AND MODE ROCK M Alison

We argued about whether they were authentic venom-heads all the way home. "Look, Gullibleson," said Lord Nose, who tended to patronize me, "that whole thing was a monumental put-on. Have you lost every shred of critical intelligence?"

"It was not!" I retorted hotly. "I remember tarantula venom from the homeopathic materia medica. I think it produced chorea or jerking and twitching of the limbs."

"Sounds grand," said Lord Nose, dripping with irony. "And what about the cow-tipping?"

"Oh, that was just to throw us off the scent," Lord Nose could be absolutely maddening at times. As soon as we got back, I dashed for my materia medica—Boericke's, the bible of the homeopath, looking rather like a much-thumbed devotional text with its marbled end-papers and gold stamping. "There it is!" I exclaimed with triumph. "Oh *god*—listen! This sounds absolutely tailor-made for the would-be rock magician! 'Remarkable nervous phenomena,'" I intoned portentously. (Lord Nose smirked.) "'Intense sexual excitement.'" (He pricked up his ears.) "'Lasciviousness mounting almost to insanity.'"

"Hey, let's see that!" He made a grab for the book while I danced back three steps.

"'Extreme sensitivity to music.' That's in black letter," I said. "That means it's especially important—like 'moral relaxation.'" I inflected this heavily lowering my voice an octave. "See, that's also in black letter! 'Must keep in constant motion. Extraordinary contractions and movements. Jerking and twitching.' And here under female symptoms: 'vulva hot and dry. Frequent erotic spasms. Pruritis vulvae. Nymphomania.'" As they poured over this last entry, I grabbed *Kent's Materia Medica* from the shelf. Kent, the dean of American homeopaths, was canon. "Look—'great fantastic dancing,' it says. 'Desire to run about, to dance and jump up and down.'"

"Hey, where do I get some of this stuff?"

"Look, it isn't all positive," I cautioned. "Listen to these symptoms: 'excessive hyperaesthesia, burning sensations, fox-like cunning and destructiveness, violence with anger, praecordial anguish, sensation as if the heart twisted and turned around.'"

"Well, is there an antidote?"

"I'm not sure there is. I think you have to dance it off—that's what the tarantella was all about. Look at what Kent says right here at the beginning—quote: 'This terrible poison should never be used except in attenuations.'"

"Well if it's such a terrible poison, how can they smoke it before every performance?"



TARANTISMO AND THE MODERN-DAY MAGICIAN Don Kennedy



That redoubtable Englishwoman, Janet Ross, late Victorian aristocratic eccentric who traveled throughout Sicily and Otranto querying after local folklore, left us a marvelously vivid account of the phenomenon as she found it in the 1880's. Tarantism had long since become institutionalized and was seen as a peculiarly female syndrome, probably because it was women who tended to get bitten while picking grapes or harvesting grain. Men, too, however are recorded as having been accidentally poisoned while greedily eating grapes (tarantulas hide in bunches of grapes to build up their internal heat which strengthens the poison) or bitten in the earlobe while sleeping on the ground.

Janet Ross's account, like so many, emphasizes the particular susceptibility of women: "I asked Don Eugenio also about the famous tarantola... (He) told me he had witnessed hundreds of cases. 'There are various species of the insect' (he said) 'of different colors and two different kinds of "tarantismo", the wet and the dry; the women in the fields are the most liable to be bitten, because they wear so little clothing on account of the intense heat. A violent fever is the beginning of the disease. The person bitten sways backwards and forwards, moaning violently. Musicians are called, and if the tune does not strike the fancy of the "tarantata" (the person who has been bitten), she moans louder, crying "No! No! Basta! Not that air." The fiddler instantly changes, and the tambourine beats fast and furious to indicate the tempo. At last the "tarantata" approves of the tempo, and springing up, begins to dance frantically.

Her friends try to find out the colour of the "tarantola" that has bitten her, and adorn her dress and her wrists with ribbons of the same tint as the insect: blue, green or red. If no one can indicate the proper color, she is decked with streamers of every hue which flutter wildly about her as she dances and tosses her arms in the air. They generally begin the ceremony indoors, but it often ends in the street, on account of the heat and the concourse of people. When the "tarantata" is quite worn out she is put into a warm bed and sleeps, sometimes for eighteen hours at a stretch. If it is a case of wet tarantismo, the musicians sit near a well, to which the "tarantata" is irresistibly attracted. While she is dancing, relays of friends deluge her with water."

Don Eugenio went on to describe an autocratic master-mason who vehemently rejected the reality of tarantismo and put it down to female malingering or hysteria. As luck or San Cataldo would have it, he himself was bitten and in his frenzy tore down his doors and was soon seen jumping about in the streets crying "Hanno ragion' la femmine! Hanno ragion' la femmine!" (The women are right! The women are right!) (The Land of Manfred, London, 1889)

Extract from the book *Tarantismo*
to be published by *High Frontiers*,
Summer 1987

"I don't know. They're young. They're resilient... Maybe the pyrolytic products are less toxic. Anyway, smoking it, you could calibrate the dosage better. I bet this stuff's been used in certain rarified rock milieux for years. Listen to what they call the 'physiognomy': 'the face shows a pale earthy hue. Eyes are wide, shining and staring, with a look almost of terror. Inflamed parts are dark red or purplish and swollen. Throbbing carotids are seen in the neck.' You know, I bet Keith Richard was into it. Or—hey!—remember Dylan's *Tarantula*?"

"You mean his novel?"

"Prose poem."

"Whatever."

"Do you suppose?..."

"Come on, Queen Mu!"

"No *really*! Remember, it was at the galley proof stage with MacMillan back in '66 when Dylan took it back after his so-called 'motorcycle accident'." I traced elaborate quotation marks in the air festooning 'motorcycle accident'.

"Where do you get all this?"

"Oh, it was in all the papers—he got an injunction and they fought it out in the courts until '71 when they finally succeeded in publishing it but not without—rumor had it—deleting certain 'sensitive material.' You know, we never heard about that accident at the time—it was all about six months after the fact. I bet it was a colossal cover-up."

"But didn't he break his back?"

"Supposedly—in three places. His neck, too. But he could have done that on tarantula venom. Gone into clonic spasm. Opisthotonus, they call it. You can flip your back out, arch back so far that..."

"Alison, you're quite *quite* mad you know! But we love you anyway." R.U. was shaking his head in mock concern; Lord Nose was moving to leave. The hour was going on three.

"You know, *Weberman* never believed in his motorcycle accident. He thought it was a cover for some drug overdose. *He* just didn't know what it was!" I called after them—but they were already out the door, elaborately miming my galloping dementia as they disappeared down the steps.

In the next few weeks, I threw myself into the tarantula literature. One fascinating account followed another. There were the studies of choreomanias like St. John's Dance, St. Vitus' Dance, St. Guy's Dance—all with overlapping symptoms, the precise clinical entity or pathology unknown—more often the disease was put down (by modern authorities) to "sympathetic contagion" or mass hysteria. Sometimes it was viewed as a festival of license, the "chorea lascivia" as Paracelsus called it. Some thought it a recrudescence of bacchantic rites that had gone underground for centuries. Checking first in that treasury of occult lore and learning, Lynn Thorndike's *History of Magic and Experimental Science*, I found at least a dozen references in volume 8—it was all the rage in the seventeenth century. As a subject for leamed discourse, I mean. Everyone who was anyone pronounced on it—Cardano, Borrichius, Campanella, Baglivi, Athanasius Kircher—why Kircher even wrote three entirely different accounts of it, in *Phonurgia Nova*, *Musurgia Universalis*, and *Magnes, sive Ars Magnetica*. He, like the others, was fascinated by its bizarre symptomatology and its implications for the understanding of magnetism, music and healing—the preoccupations of both the Pythagorean and Orphic schools.

Augustus Hare described tarantism as he found it in the boot of Italy, early in this century: "... An epidemic of melancholy madness, which pervaded the women of Apulia, ending in frenzies like those of hydrophobia and frequently in death, was believed to proceed from the bite of the tarantula, chiefly because the disease appeared at the season when this spider woke up to its summer life. It was believed that music was the best means of giving relief to the tarantolati, inciting them to dance and causing them to throw off the poison of the tarantola in perspiration. The patient, dressed in white and crowned with flowers, used to be led out into the garden by her friend, and the musicians in attendance would play the air of the tarantella, which the "tarantolata" would follow, only leaving one partner after another until she finally fell down exhausted, when a pail of cold water was thrown on her, and she was put to bed. The epidemic of Apulia, and the belief in the tarantula bite, spread over the whole of Italy, till regular fetes were appointed for the cure, which received the name of 'carnaveletti delle donne'."



continued on page 39

PAUL KANTNER

Kantner arrives at Cynthia Bowman's (former beau and personal manager; current personal manager) about a half-hour late for the interview. Cynthia has some promo spots for him to do. One requires a two hour drive to be on a campus radio station for one minute. Understandably unenthusiastic, Kantner agrees to do it (albeit with a voice dripping with controlled exasperation and irony). Cynthia grows irritable.

Next, Bruce Springsteen is coming to town and Rolling Stone wants a blurb from Paul on "The Boss." Paul, it transpires, finds Bruce boring. Cynthia thinks being quoted in Rolling Stone is important for Paul's re-entry into the music scene with the Kantner-Balin-Cassady Band and that he ought to think of something nice to say. Understandably unenthusiastic, Kantner agrees (albeit with a voice dripping with controlled exasperation and irony). Cynthia grows more irritable.

Next, Paul wants to know if he can smoke a joint in Cynthia's office. This, it transpires, he knows is not allowed as it may arouse the ire of the people in the other offices; most particularly the rent-a-cop security agency next door. Understandably unenthusiastic, Kantner agrees (albeit with a voice dripping with controlled exasperation and irony). Cynthia leaves. The interview begins.

PAUL KANTNER: There doesn't seem to be the occurrence of any psychedelic acid around.

HIGH FRONTIERS: *Oh, there's a lot of good clean acid around.*

Who makes it?

I don't know who makes it. There are other, legal things being made, like 2CB. Are you interested?

No. I sort of filled up a long time ago.

Have you tried Ecstasy?

No. I don't want to. I feel wonderful already.

I'm going to go way back to your first solo album, Blows Against The Empire. That was based on an idea, or fantasy, or possibly a real projection of industry or government or whomever building a starship...

Free physicists and free pharmacists. Escapist literature. Was that a realistic prediction or a fantasy? Something you perceive as possible...

I don't know if I'll be involved in space migration. It might not be around by the time we die, if we die. Actually, we might conquer that by the time we're old. I don't know, really. It was speculative escapist literature, really.

Does that idea still excite you?

Oh, yeah. Lots of people would like to go out there. How far out there is another question.

Do you follow developments in space, L5...

Sure. I get L5 literature all the time. NASA literature.

Is your science fiction book a similar type projection?

I've played it to a new era... it's escapist again, where a bunch of people go out and establish a new colony in Australia in the desert, eventually getting off the planet.

Did you study the actual physics and mathematics of building a starship and that sort of thing?

I subverted the idea of building a starship by creating an energy field around a 20 mile square strip of Australia... just rip the whole thing out of the ground.

Is the energy field created psychically? No, atomically. Just create a positive application of nuclear physics, nuclear power. It does get a little into psychic powers, the powers that exist around Mt. Shasta, things like that. The process is the actual hero of the story, rather than any one person.

— TEST SUBJECT

Have you had contact experiences?

You can never tell. They wipe it out of your memory.

What do you think about the contrast between people who used drugs and did something positive and people who had a lot of trouble with it?

It's just a matter of control. You either have it or you don't. It's probably largely a matter of luck.

Do you think it might be genetic?

Who can tell? From my point of view, if you're getting fucked up, you stop. You should have the presence of mind to recognize it, or your friends will tell you. I don't know. That's just not one of my weaknesses.

We used ourselves as test projects during the sixties. We gobbled down anything that came our way because we'd know when we trusted the people. But some people went over that line and nobody knows what... who... why.

Do you think the presence of cocaine replaced psychedelics at some point?

No. At one point there was something called the Quick-silver Special, which was half cocaine, half sunshine. You'd snort it.

I filled up, though. I don't think it's good to do a lot of anything. It's like staying in high school forever. There's a certain time when it's applicable and it was a good learning experience for me. I can't recommend it for everybody given the number of casualties that've existed. It's a big unknown. It's like going out to the frontier if you want to romanticize it. It's like sticking your hand in the incinerator if you don't want to romanticize it.

You're not at all interested in any of the new stuff coming out of the laboratories?

I'm used to having done all this back then, when it was a naive, trusting time. You could walk out on the street and really not worry about much of anything, particularly in the days when it wasn't illegal. Everybody just had fun. Now you've got night stalkers and every hitchhiker looks like Charles Manson.

I find that psychedelics clear up a lot of paranoia. It gives you more perspective on it.

Why not be paranoid by things like the night stalker? Someone sneaking into your house to tear your eyes out! Makes for a colorful movie.

On the other hand, your chances of getting lit by the night stalker (if you live in California) were 1 in 500,000 or something.

I'm waiting for Sky Saxon to make a comeback. I've heard he's hovering around somewhere.

A lot of our readers are Tim Leary freaks. To what extent have you been influenced philosophically by Leary? I don't perceive the question as being answerable in that fashion. I like a lot of Tim's ideas. He expresses them well. He's humorous.

Did you read his future history series? Neuropolitics... Oh, yeah. I steal a few phrases from time to time. He's useful. He sometimes slips into a silly place, which is probably healthy in the long run.

Do you have anything to say about your brain hemorrhage?

It just happened. I don't know if it was a brain hemorrhage. There was blood in the spinal fluid which indicated... I don't remember. There were all these surgeons hovering above me with scalpels. They gave me these tests and it just went away.

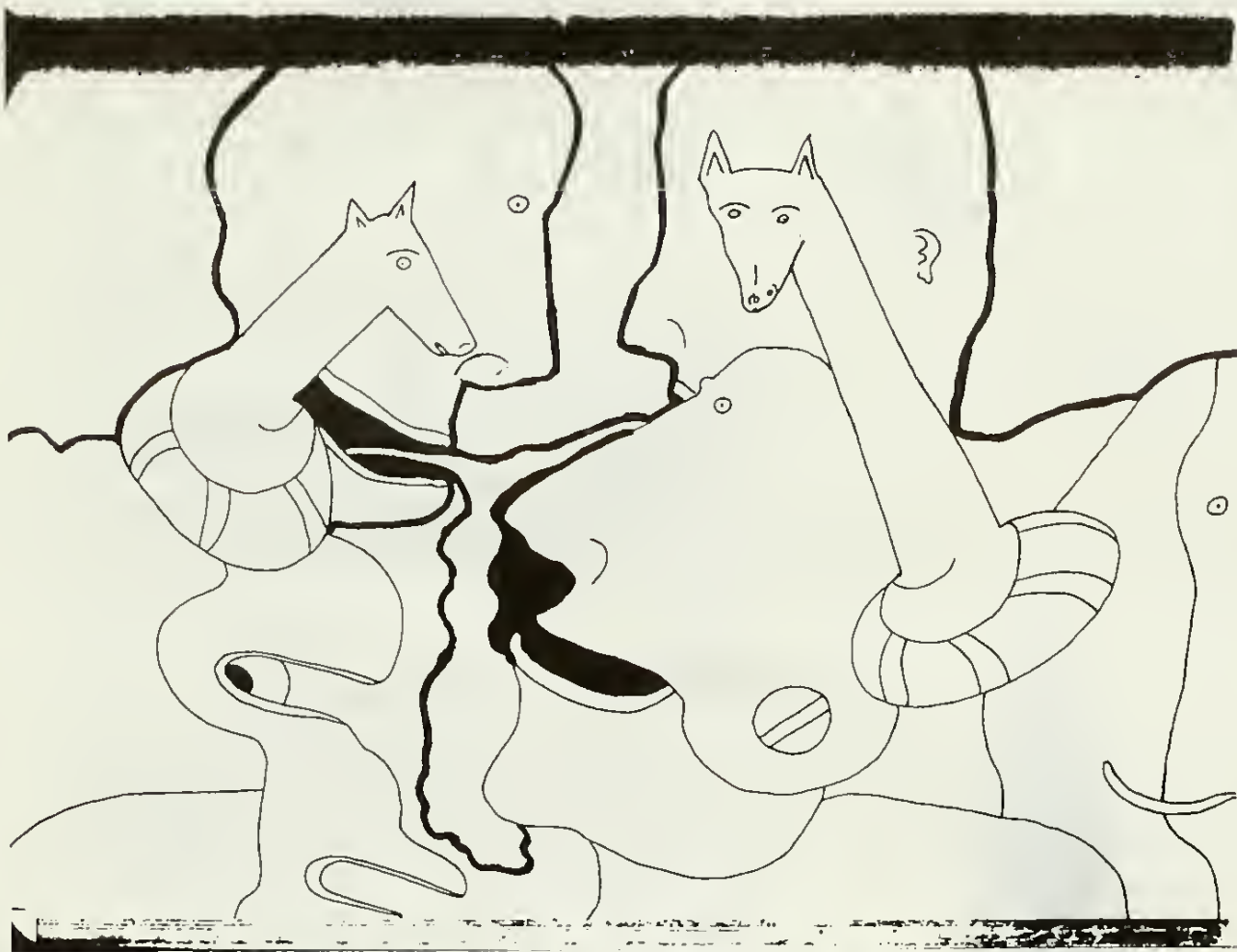
Did you have a death experience?

No. Not at all. No bells. No white lights or old men. They passed me over.

Since music is one of our three favorite obsessions, we were very excited to have the opportunity to interview Diamanda Galas. During our over 20 years of intensive study of classical and rock music, we have been lucky enough to hear all the Big Names in opera in live performances. We want to make clear that Ms. Galas is one of the most technically impressive performers we have ever heard. More over, her performances effectively evoke some of the intense states we associate with psychedelic drugs and sex magic. Most interviews with her have missed the depth and subtlety of her artistry. They either take a supercilious, "establishment avant-garde" point of view or fall prey to superficial horror show psychoanalysis of her subject matter.

In this interview we've dusted off our art criticism and applied our off-the-wall perspective to draw Ms. Galas out on the subjects of creativity, technique (and, of course, drugs). We hope that this attempt provides a broader musical context for a richer appreciation of the powerful emotions and ideas that make up Ms. Galas' art.

Gracie & Zarkov



DIAMANDA GALAS :

High Frontiers: Do you consciously try for possession-type states? Were you when you first started doing improvisation, and do you now?

Diamanda Galas: Well, this is funny. I don't know what those conscious states are anymore. I just go on stage and I do this thing. What I think about is maximum concentration. I just get involved in this act. As it is physically difficult to execute, there's no way I could do it if I weren't in complete concentration. If I were doing an entertainment thing, checking out the audience... which I never see because of the lights... then I wouldn't need to be as focused. So I think when you get into a severe form of concentration on any level, you do experience what are known as altered states of consciousness blah blah blah. Well, you can do this with a lot of different drugs, right. You get into different consciousness with different drugs. So this is just another way of doing it. Now if I were to actually take drugs for my performances, it would be over. I could never do it. I used to take cortisone. Cortisone's a great drug. I would have to take cortisone if I'd been working too hard, and the thing with that is that it really does induce a really psycho state, and I enjoy it. So once I rolled off the stage or jumped off the stage with two mikes, rolled on the floor, and jumped back in like ten seconds. I had black and blue marks all over my legs—didn't even feel it. So that's the only one. And that's a real dangerous drug after awhile. If it weren't, I'd take it a lot. I find it highly interesting. I did do some kind of research when I was in college—we had anechoic chambers, and I would take LSD and lock myself in an anechoic chamber and scream a lot.

I gather you are not a performer who establishes a rapport with the audience and plays off the audience. You get up there and you do your thing and you just happen to do your thing in front of a group of people.

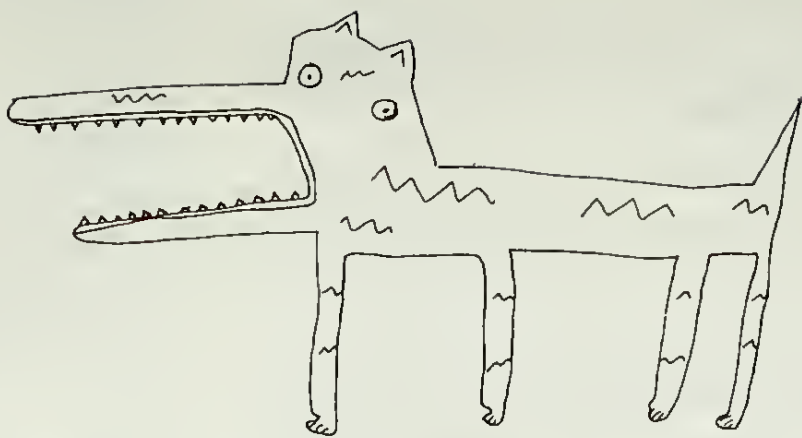
Right. One could say if that's the case, why are you even performing? I suppose I do get some kind of completely paranoid schizophrenic energy from doing this obscene thing. To be that emotional in front of people you don't know—it's wrong.

It's a taboo-breaker.

Yeah, it is, and it's insane. Ultimately. And that gives me a lot of energy, that kind of thing. Because I'm operating on the basis of what people would consider my weakness, which is this real paranoia. So I take that and then twist it around and it gives me more energy. I don't think about it when I'm onstage. I just look at that in retrospect and say that Iggy Pop rolling around on shards of glass is probably not doing that in his bathroom by himself. He's probably someone who does that with people there because it's some sort of weird sacrificial performance ritual.

Do you think there's more juice available with an audience than by yourself?

Because there's an audience there, if you make a mistake it's sort of forbidden. You have to really really concentrate because you're being tested. I think the



High Priestesses of the New Erotic Avant-Garde



greatest performers were probably doing Coliseum performances. If you were great they let you live, and if you weren't you were nixed. So it's kind of like that. Fear maximizes concentration. I'm not afraid of each member of the audience, but there's a weird implicit thing that happens. When I say it's an obscene sort of performance...it's obscene to perform, I mean it is!

You talk about both making a mistake and creating your music. Would you consider yourself an updated version of the virtuoso—creating things not only that other people can't do but things that are so difficult that there's a chance that you might not be able to do it in performance? The Liszt tradition, or the Paganini tradition...

Yes. It's funny how Liszt was defamed by a lot of people, and Paganini also... I don't understand what that's all about, that logic... but definitely, yes, that tradition.

Could you recreate your performances note for note, day after day, or is it...

I wouldn't want to.

The question is, "could you?" In terms of how you do it. This question is backing into how much of your performance is improvisation versus how much is thought-out artistry.

I could, but I'd have to listen to it a lot. There's so much detail work, I'd have to listen to it...yeah, I could notate it for myself inasmuch as each section will have certain Timbre elements, and certain linguistic things, and follow a relative pitch spectrum here, processing the spatial manipulation. Each section has a certain integrity, so there's no arbitrary improvisation. When I do improvisation now in these pieces, it's only kind of ornamentation of certain givens that must be there.

We were arguing on the way over whether some of your ornamentation was melisma or true polyphony where you try to, in effect, have a vertical line that goes all the way through the texture.

Both. In the case of multiphonics there really is that sense. These are tones with more than one resonance center. I do try to do that. I used to have these concepts, of like subtractive synthesis of a huge shape, take a huge bunch of physical noise, and shape it so you could go to something clean, relatively speaking, like a sine wave.

The shaping comes from the interference pattern which cancels out certain things so what's left is clean.

Right.

Have you ever heard the Tibetan monks who do multi-tones?

It's strange, I only heard one minute once, and I was very impressed by that one minute. I'd like to hear them again. I really would like to hear them again.

Because I've been using the voice, I don't notate something and then do it. My rehearsal procedure has always been—I'll go into a studio with the lights off and I'll

start working on a particular idea. But there's so much detail work within the process of working on this idea, and there's so much of an evolution of a sound into other sounds, that it's kind of a corporeal production of the music that is the essence of the work I do.

Let's face it, in order to stand up there with a large audience—it wouldn't interest me to do some introverted, self-referential kind of improvisation because it would project (only) about this far. I have to do something that leaves them—I don't mean like Las Vegas—but it has to be the best choices all the time. That's why a lot of new music that is written with the context of university support really bothers me because you may have thirty people that won't leave, but if you try to get a thousand there, they're just gonna say, "Listen man, I don't have to do this. I can watch a Charles Bronson film." Why do it, ultimately? I said in this book that's come out recently, "Why should people go to performances when drugs are more interesting than performances are?" Artists are not supposed to be interested in drugs. I don't know how that is. It's a really weird reaction to the 60s or something. I mean, I think the 60s are interesting, always have thought they were interesting. So what's going to happen is that people are going to say, "Oh, my god. She's a fucking hippie." And I'm going to laugh my ass off. Because what does this mean?

Speaking of information theory, the idea of subtracting things to make them shapes... have you ever done DMT?

No one has ever!... "Speaking of information theory, have you ever done DMT?" (Laughs). No. In fact, I've heard it's quite interesting.

It's interesting for precisely those reasons... As a singer, also.

As a singer?

It sings to you. DMT has vocal phenomena. In terms of hearing singing or hearing sounds. And what you see can be driven by what you sing. If you sing while you're on it, the image will shift as you sing.

Why do you think people are so drug reactionary now?

They have been for awhile. You know, if you're an artist and you say you do any kind of drug, you immediately get shit on. I did this interview where I talked about drugs, and someone said, "Boy you're really in for it now." I was talking about minimal music. I said, "If you want minimal music, go take some quaaludes and take a bath."

With the Baudelaire *Litanies of Satan*, are you actually using the poem as an underlying structure in terms of the size and shape of the form or do you just go from there?

Well, I did use the text, obviously, and kept its integrity, but the text can only give you so much information and after that you have to decide why it is you chose that text and that puts you into another structure. You have to create your own structure. That was a really hard thing to do. I haven't worked with many outlined texts like that.

If you were great they let you live, and you weren't you were nixed.

As a dominatrix, I prefer to control my material.

In my position, I get flack because I'm working with an operatic voice and an operatic technique, so people say, "Why are you insisting on being flamboyant in ways that are wrong?" What is this colorless aesthetic?! I don't understand it. I get a lot of shit because I say that my favorite performers are Jimi Hendrix and Maria Callas. "God! What do those two have in common?"

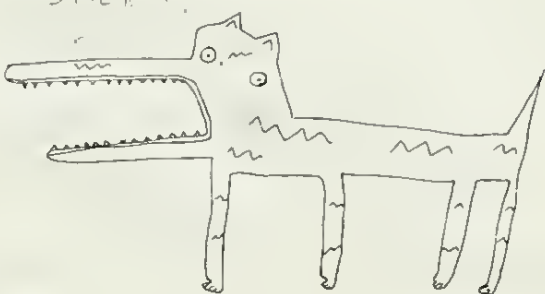
You should know that in New York before I did this New York Philharmonic thing, some person had advertised me as The High Priestess of the New Erotic Psychedelic Avant-Garde.

Although I was in the university, the music I was doing didn't have anything to do with the university at all. It wasn't academic. But at the same time I had no awareness at all during those years of what was going on in the punk movement and all this stuff. It was as if you create in isolation. Then when I did my first performances some friends of mine from the Living Theatre saw some stuff and they said I should do the mental institution circuit because those people wouldn't leave, and so that was kind of interesting, but when I would do this stuff in front of the art people... I remember the first time, they just sat there like "Oh, no, what? why?" Because people were doing stuff like taking rope with a clothespin and putting it on this side of the room and over there and someone would stand there with their clothes off and smile at you and that was the piece. It was just kind of funny for me because it was all very dry shit that I saw, and my stuff really embarrassed them, they really hated it, so I had no context for what I was doing. So I was told I really shouldn't do this kind of stuff, shouldn't continue it, it was pointless. And so I came off with an idea seven years ago that if someone really doesn't like what you're doing the only choice you have is to do more of it. Then I came to San Francisco after New York and people suddenly said that this was new work, and blah blah, and what were my influences. This should be fun. When I didn't have any influences at all. You walk down the street and hear things you like. But there were no direct influences and no direct precursors, really. So I would sit and write people down that I like. I like Janis Joplin and I like Jimi Hendrix and Roger Corman.

You talked a lot about the form of how you do things and the setting. What is the content?

That would be a hard thing to answer, because it's music and it's created in a very non-verbal way. And so for me to articulate that would kind've be a lie.

Whats the matter with ya?!
Why wait you even goddamn fetch
a stick?!



Why do you choose pieces of words as opposed to purely moanings?

That's a good question. Part of it is because you communicate on two levels. If you insist on no words then you're communicating in this one way, but if you use words every once in awhile, you can work on two levels. When a person hears specific words that make sense—lets say five, six words together—that addresses you in one way, and then you can subvert that with non-verbal work. Then you can in turn subvert the non-verbal work. I just choose to use a full palette of expression. That's why I have the operatic technique. It's the only reason I developed it. That's why I use all these vocal sounds and words and digital signal processes, spatial manipulations.

Music is really old-fashioned. There's a concept of historical precedent, not just in the performance tradition, but in composition and, for example, in how you choose to work in electronics. It's not like art where movements were broken very severely—let's say someone does something completely different, and people break them, and then someone does something completely different in a dialectical way. Music just moves one step here, one step there.

I did this piece with Medea as a psychopath. I got so much shit. I can't tell you. The music people said, "How dare you portray her as a psychopath. She was beautiful, lyrical... sad love affair," all this shit. I'm just saying, she killed her children and she was able to send this gown to a woman that made her burst into flames and burn her flesh. This isn't a nice girl here. Why is it that a painter like Pollock or somebody could eventually get support, people paying huge amounts of money for one of their paintings, whereas someone like Xenakis or Stockhausen, they do a record and they hardly get anything for it? Why is it that people are able to attain a certain stature of competence in the visual arts world and people can deal with that? They'll buy a painting but not listen to a bizarre record.

There's a cynical answer to that, and it goes back to the Rockefellers and the Museum of Modern Art back in the 20s or 30s. They made it a commodity. You can speculate on that piece of art, and you can't speculate on music. Unless you could get people to buy scores the same way they buy paintings, and they don't because the score's not the piece, the score's not the performance. You can't get them bidding the price up. It's a purely financial sort of thing. You can't get people to do that with music because every time it's performed it's gone.

So I was joking with some friends of mine in New York and said I was going to advertise in *Art Forum*. I was going to stop performing and only perform for \$25,000 for three people. Once a year. And they'd support me. But I thought if that's what it is—if the idea's paying for a piece of art so that no one else can get it—it's kind've funny. With a painting you can look at it and look away from it and then you sort of see the whole thing and the rest of your concentration is discovering pieces. Whereas with music you have to continue the concentration over a period of time to sort out—you have to really sit there for 25 minutes, and it's not getting an overview, it's listening moment to moment and then getting an overview. It's kind of a micro and macro structure. It's harder in terms of demands on concentration. So that would make it much harder to sell. Between my two pieces at the I-Beam, I also organized a series of splatter films which were not all splatter films, but real sick—the first one, *Veil of Blood*, is this kind of vampire lesbian dominatrix thing. You have these women dancing, and these evil women

seducing all the young girls. Then it cuts to a castration scene—I had all these really great films. The only stipulation was that there be no men at all, except for the victim in that one, and I had them set up. One scene where a woman becomes attacked by insects, covered with tarantulas. I got so much shit from them. Some people said that by allowing my performances to be interrupted by this I was really corrupting my work—corrupting the vision other people had of it—by giving them this subversive splatter slant. And I agree. That's the funny thing. But I really wanted to do it.

It's her again. The dark Goddess. I've been there too, and yeah, there's a lot more juice out of that. There's a lot more juice out of Cassandra than out of Helen of Troy as far as I'm concerned. She's a piece of something darker. The pieces that're missing right now are all those dark pieces. And so they've got this enormous shadow of power back there with no one paying attention to it. And there's a tremendous kick to bringing it out into the open again and rubbing people's noses in it.

Yeah, I hadn't even thought of it in that way. As you suggested, it is becoming more present. That's a little frightening—once they become present, people will want to grab them and commercialize them. It would be bad for people to cheapen it. Then it would lose the power that kept it in the background for awhile. That's kind've a delicate issue. I get a little worried about the image of my work becoming popular before people understand the work. Because in that moment when the image becomes popular, it teeters because it will, of course, become unpopular, and the music will become unpopular, because the image saturates.

I read something about some woman in New York, and it said she's a "more pure Diamanda Galas." They said it's because she has no vocal technique, and therefore her screams are real. Well, that's great. But the thing is that for ten minutes you can get someone to go on stage and scream and be interesting. It gets beyond ten minutes, and if you don't have technique, you're not a good artist, you're not a good painter, you're not able to manipulate these variables to show something other than that you are possessed. I don't mind being possessed, but as a dominatrix, I prefer to control my material.

There's a big difference between being a medium, where the possession comes through you and you're a blank, and being a shaman where the possession is something you evoke and you control with your technique.

That's right. It takes skill. You have to be a craftsman. You have to have a kind of entropy, of chaos, things getting weirder and weirder, and you have to have a dialectic between that and things getting very ordered so that you can control the material. So that things are created from a chaotic sensibility, but you still have to organize them.

The criticism you have made of the woman who was described as "more pure" is an expression of the difference between art and raw emotion. Nobody wants to just go and see somebody cry.

No, if you want this you can just go into mental institutions. You can see someone bang her head against the wall and scream. She will not only do that for ten minutes, she'll do that for ten days. If you want to sit there and listen to that for ten days, cool. But I personally would find that to be just like watching a wall after awhile. It would become obnoxious. Also, for purely hedonistic reasons, I've been interested in maximum change over time. So I tend to think that in order to achieve that end you have to have a lot of discipline so you can really move things quickly, move objects around quickly.

illustrations by Gordon Henderson

High Frontiers interviewed Alison Kennedy (alias Alison Wonderland or Queen Mu) in her aerie in the Berkeley hills. The room was full of diviute clutter: stacks of xeroxes, pylons of books bristling with multicolored markers. She seemed somewhat less manic than when we'd last seen her. She had sedated herself, she confided, for the ordeal. Brandy? we wondered. Tryptophane? Valerian root with tincture of glow worm?

High Frontiers: Great opening! I expected something turgid and dry from those stacks of xeroxes you've amassed. But didn't you doctor it a bit - use a little literary licence?

Alison: Not at all! That's precisely how the whole thing unfolded. In fact, I had no idea what I was dealing with when I first stumbled on this Orphic gold mine—the vastness of it, it's extraordinary ramifications. I just thought: "What a great little bagatelle this would make for High Frontiers. I'll knock it off in a week and go back to my Great Work—which was sting-rays."

H.F.: And that was a year ago?

AK: Just over—September 31, 1985, and I've been hot on the trail ever since. At first the aspect that fascinated me was its link with ancient female ecstatic rites—rites that have survived into this century and have in fact been fully and richly documented by ethnomusicologists—though not in the English language. Ernesto de Martino in *La Terra del Rimorso* did a magnificent job collecting all the history and folklore which he integrated with documentary coverage of its present-day survivals in Apulia—the heel of the boot of Italy. The exorcistic ritual associated with the bite is performed annually on the feast day of St. Paul under Church auspices and is attended by hundreds of men and women, especially adolescent boys and girls.

I. M. Lewis has described this "macabre cultural construct" where the libertine spider is identified with the ascetic apostle in *Ecstatic Religion*. They summon the saint with the invocation "My Saint Paul of the Tarantists who pricks the girls in their vaginas, my Saint Paul of the Serpents who pricks the boys in their testicles."

H.F.: Weird stuff! And you say this goes back to Dionysus?

AK: Actually, J. F. Gmelin, back in 1795 appears to have been the first to suggest that this rite was a survival of ancient Bacchantic orgies. The women saved their pocket money all year and made white gowns that were perfect replicas of ancient Greek off-the-shoulder maenad gowns, wore coloured streamers tied to their upper arms which fluttered wildly as they danced, their hair streaming loose and their heads thrown back in ecstasy—exactly as maenads are depicted on Greek vases. Incidentally Patti Smith, one tarantula venom initiate, is depicted wearing just such a gown in the pages of *Babel*. They hired itinerant musicians to play with the money they'd saved for festivals known as "carnaveletti delle donne."

H.F.: So this was a peculiarly female institution?

AK: Well, that's what I thought at first. But now I believe that there are three separate strands of tradition—the female ecstatic rites, the gay Orphic poetic tradition, connected with both seership and the saltimbanques, and the Gypsy love magic and "cante jondo" tradition—popularly known as "Deep Song" or flamenco.

H.F.: It sounds like this spider is found all over the place.

AK: Well, there are many sub-species of *Lycosa tarentula*—*narbonensis*, *radiata*, *hispanica*, *infernalis*, etc. and these are found all through the circum-Mediterranean area and near East. There are also other spiders—the mygale for example, or the spiderlike arachnid known as *Galeodes*, the *Arza* in Sardinia, and even an ant, *Mutilla calva*. These all produce similar syndromes—profound prostration followed by an exaltation of the nervous system, lascivious dancing, emotional dithyrambs, possession states. All spider poisons profoundly affect the nervous system—possibly because of the ATP in spider venom. The *Galeodes* found in North Africa seems to be the gadfly or gadbee of antiquity—the *oestros* which caused the "ruttin madness" in women—though others have identified it as a kind of *Tabanus* or horsefly. It's all very confusing—the ancients didn't think in the same strict taxonomic categories as we and the word "tarantula" was applied to any number of critters. The phenomenon itself has been institutionalized differently in each culture—different names, different cures, different functionalist explanations. In Ethiopia or Abyssinia for example, it is known as "Tigretier" or "Tigretismo" and the venom is smoked on hemp in secret cultic rites—by women, the Zars, certain orgiastic Sufi orders. In Andalusia, in Southern Spain, it was used clandestinely by gypsies in love philtres; in the *boda gitana* or Gypsy wedding fiesta, as an ingredient along with menstrual blood in the wedding cake to be consumed by bride and groom; and the blood of the tarantula consumed by Flamenco dancers and musicians to invoke the "duende" or powerful tellurian energy that wells up through the soles of the feet inspiring the most impassioned displays of technical virtuosity and "soul".

H.F.: Before we go any further, maybe you could recapitulate the effects of tarantula venom for our readers. I know you go into much greater detail in the book, but what does T.V. produce besides intense sexual excitation?

AK: Oh, that's just the beginning. You might say that it releases the Kundalini fire. It's a powerful spinal nervous system stimulant—like strychnine, aconite or panther gall bladder. It produces a manic-depressive syndrome to the nth degree and an extraordinary excitation of the special senses—sound, music, color, odor—as well as synaesthesia. It moves up successively through the chakras, producing a really amazing heightening of the emotions reminiscent of "Adam" or the phenethylamine tribe—only with tarantula venom you've got both the agony and the ecstasy—anguish and rapture, a little hell to harrow

before you enter into the gates of horn.

H.F.: What are the gates of horn?

AK: The gates of horn gave one access to viridical dreams, prophetic knowledge. But, as Rimbaud said in one of his *Voyant letters*, "*Les souffrances sont énormes*"—The sufferings are immense—"All forms of love, of suffering, of madness... he exhausts within himself all the poisons. Unspeakable torments, where he will need the greatest faith, a superhuman strength, where he becomes the great invalid, the great criminal, the great accursed, and the Supreme Scientist!... So what if he is destroyed in his ecstatic flight through things unheard of, unnameable: other horrible workers will come; they will begin at the horizons where the first has fallen!"

H.F.: It doesn't sound particularly recreational!

AK: Well, tarantula venom is incredibly toxic stuff. Lautréamont killed himself on it and Rimbaud effectively burnt out his poetic daemon. But then again, all the phenethylamines should be used with the greatest circumspection as well. They drain your marrow—what the Greeks call *muelos*, the life stuff, the vital flame. Rimbaud was conscious of how toxic it was—"I'm crapping myself up as much as possible," he wrote. "I say that one must be a seer, one must make oneself a seer, through a long, immense, and calculated disordering of all the senses."

H.F.: Sounds rugged!

AK: It is—but that was central to the Orphic notion of the poet's mission—and personal calvary. It was thought that the soul had to be tempered or perfected through extreme states of suffering. A commonly occurring emblem for the alchemical stage known as the "nigredo" was the crowned heart transpierced by swords. Éliphas Levi places great stress on the idea also. There's a great quote in his *History of Magic*, "Learn how to suffer and learn how to die—such are the gymnastics of eternity and such is the immortal novitiate."

"The gymnastics of eternity" is a telling phrase in view of the cult of the saltimbanque in the work of many Orphic poets—Rimbaud, Rilke, Lorca. The poet was seen, in the French Romantic tradition, as taking great risks—as being a high-wire artist, as narrowly escaping the jaws of death. Poets consorted with jugglers and acrobats in the old Commedia dell'Arte days of Theophile Gautier. The surrealists, Picasso, Apollinaire and Rilke, hung out with the trapeze artists of the Cirque Médrano on the outskirts of Paris and immortalized them in their work. "Let's be like them!" cried Rilke. "Let's never fall without dying!" This whole notion of the poet as daredevil artist is alien to us in the English-speaking world bred on the pabulum of the poet as effete, limp wristed and phthisical.



H.F.: Well, do you think acrobats also used tarantula venom?

AK: It's occurred to me. I wonder just how far its secret use has spread. Certainly from the descriptions of its effects on the nervous system—the superhuman grace, timing and flexibility that are associated with it—would commend it to the performer. Edward Topsell, for example, in his classic *History of the Four Footed Beasts...* says that those bitten by the tarantula "dance so well, with such good grace and measure, and sing so sweetly as though they had spent all their lives in some dancing and singing school!" And, of course, the homeopathic reports always mention "contortionistic body movements" as a prime symptom along with "great fantastic dancing."

H.F.: Well, I can see how it would make for some dazzling stage magic.

AK: It's hard to know how many rock performers have been into the stuff. Harold thought Jimi Hendrix might have used it. Any rock musicians who hung out in Marrakech might conceivably have run into it. Patti Smith definitely was into it at one point. On *Radio Ethiopia* she writes "the drug that surrounds the heart, the pipe that lies on its side still burns" and sings: "Oh, I see your stare/ it's spiraling up there/ up through the center of my brain/ baby come/ baby go/ and free the hurricane oh I go to the center of the airplane/ baby got a beat in the center of the ring/ and my heart is pumping/ and my fists are pumping"—almost a clinical description of tarantula venom intoxication, with its emphasis on the heart symptoms. "Release (Ethiopian) is the drug... an animal howl says it all," she writes on the back of the album, and takes as the leitmotif for the whole album Breton's "Beauty will be convulsive or not at all."

H.F.: Did her venom use start with Ethiopia?

AK: Oh, no. There are many allusions in her book *Babel*—at least by '73 she was using it. "The Stream" and "Saba the Bird" are about venom initiation. In "Neo Boy" she writes: "The long animal cry/ woman is blessed, the perfect merging of beauty and beast, the green gas moving in like excitement... a woman alone in a tube of sound, resounding is resounding, a long low whine moving through the spine."

H.F.: What can you tell us about the artist as outcast, as pariah?

AK: Of course, that's a favorite theme of Patti Smith's taken from Rimbaud. Rimbaud referred to tarantula venom as "merde" (eating merde was the code word for T.V. in letters to Verlaine.) He was conscious of its' being polluting as well as sacred, as being totally beyond the pale, beyond the understanding of petit bourgeois society. He called himself "the hyena" (the hyena eats shit as well as carrion and, for good measure, was said to be hermaphroditic); in other words, the most glorious taboo breaker of them all. His friends were called the "oestros," and "the toad's friend." Patti Smith called the artist a rat (anagram of art) or after Rimbaud—a nigger—"the great accursed." And Lautréamont had a whole host of epithets for himself drawn from the natural history realm.

H.F.: Didn't you say Garcia Lorca was into the stuff?

AK: Well, there is a great deal of internal evidence in his poetry that he was. He began studying flamenco guitar with two old gypsy masters in the Sacro Monte outside Granada at the age of 17. His extraordinary personal charm and seductiveness may have led one of them to "turn him on" to tarantula venom—even though, normally, no *payo* would have been let in on it. He helped de Falla organize the first Festival of Cante Jondo only a few years later—the woodcut emblazoned on the program cover features, among other emblems of cante jondo, a tarantula in the lower left hand corner. The central icon is the heart transfixed by swords with an eye in the center crying tears of blood—markedly similar to the eye in the heart in certain of Athanasius Kircher's cosmograms or in Sufi emblems. It seems to symbolize loving compassion or the wisdom of the heart born of soul suffering.

H.F.: Do you have any actual evidence that the gypsies turned him on?

AK: No, quite frankly it's all wild surmise. It might have been Manuel Torres, with his "black torso of the Pharaoh." Or another possibility which fits in with the tradition of older gay Orphic poets turning on promising younger poets, is the Count of Miraflores de los Angeles whom he met at the Gongora Festival in Seville. He seems to have had all prerequisites for a T.V. habitué: he was a magician, theosophist, hypnotist, poet, and Allumbrado. But really tracing the chain of transmission is a fairly futile (if entertaining) exercise.

H.F.: Sometimes these things aren't passed on in a linear way at all...

AK: Precisely! Did Dali get it from Lorca or did he get it from the Allumbrados and Lorca through the gypsies? All we know is, in Spain at least, it's use was closely related to the cante jondo tradition—"Deep Song"—the *soleares* and *signiriyas* and the cult of the duende. Lorca, in his famous lecture on "The Theory and Function of the Duende" lists a few of the poets who had a "duende"—that is a daemon or earthy goblin that courses through them producing what's called the furor poeticus. Listen to this quote: "To help us seek the duende there is neither map nor discipline. All one knows is that it burns the blood like powdered glass, that it exhausts, that it rejects all the sweet geometry one has learned, that it compels Goya to paint with his knees and with his fists horrible bitumen blacks. Or that it leaves Mossen Cinto Verdager naked in the cold air of the Pyrenees... that it dresses the delicate body of Rimbaud in an acrobat's green suit; or that it puts the eyes of a dead fish on Count Lautréamont in the early morning Boulevard."

H.F.: Didn't you say that Lautréamont was another initiate?

AK: Well, it was actually this very quote from Lorca that alerted me to the possibility. I already had plenty of evidence for Rimbaud's use by the time I stumbled on this reference, and I had always wondered why Lautréamont had been taken up and practically divinized by the surrealists. So I began going through his major work fairly meticulously—*Les Chants de Maldoror*, and there in the fifth chant, I hit paydirt.

H.F.: Perhaps we should mention that Maldoror is considered the masterpiece of fin-de-siecle morbidity.

AK: And mortality!

H.F.: And dark humor...

AK: And revolt! It's gratuitously grotesque—like grand guignol, he's trying to "gross out" the reader.

H.F.: But funny as hell! It was embraced by the Surrealists and Lautréamont seen as some kind of martyr.

AK: Actually, a swan. Lorca was also called a swan.

H.F.: A swan?

AK: Swan, cisne, was one of the epithets for Orpheus. Orpheus, you know, was reincarnated as a swan—after his severed head sailed to Lesbos prophesying all the way—a favorite decadent art theme. Breton called Lautréamont "the swan of Montevideo" and boasted, "I have access to him as a convulsory."

H.F.: So I suppose Breton is another T.V. initiate.

AK: I was getting to that!—*Poisson Soluble* is, of course, a play on "Poisou soluble" and it's packed with venom references.

H.F.: But back to Lautréamont!

AK: You know he composed all these poems late at night declaiming loudly to the accompaniment of a piano, quite Pierrot Lunaire. He may have been constitutionally melancholic, but his work more than any other exemplifies the "depraved fancy" sometimes associated with tarantula venom. Baglivi says "many have sought the sepulchre and lonely places, and even extended themselves upon the bier. Desperate they court dissolution... The restraints of modesty being loosed, they sigh deeply, howl, make indecent gestures, expose their sexual or-

“I’m Bigger Than Dylan . . .”

a talk with Skye Saxon

It was twenty years ago today
Sky Saxon taught
The Seeds to play.

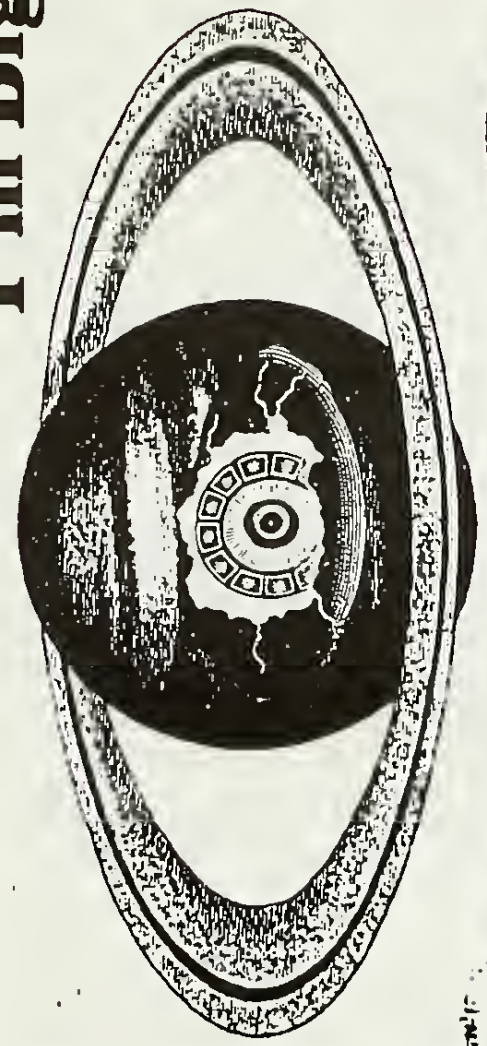


Fig. 1



13



12

It's now 1986 and Sky has returned to Los Angeles to bask in glory. The legendary godfather of garage-psych is highriding the wave of neo-psychedelia.

Together again with the original Seeds, Sky has re-recorded his greatest hits. With Firewall, he's done an album of new songs. And with bands including Redd Kross, SS-20, members of The Bangles, Dream Syndicate, The Droogs, Nina Hagen, and many others, he has done a variety of impromptu sessions. A live Sky Saxon lp is due out soon on Bomp Records.

“I believe the Seeds are the American Beatles. It needs to be written up as that. The American Beatles and the American Rolling Stones.”

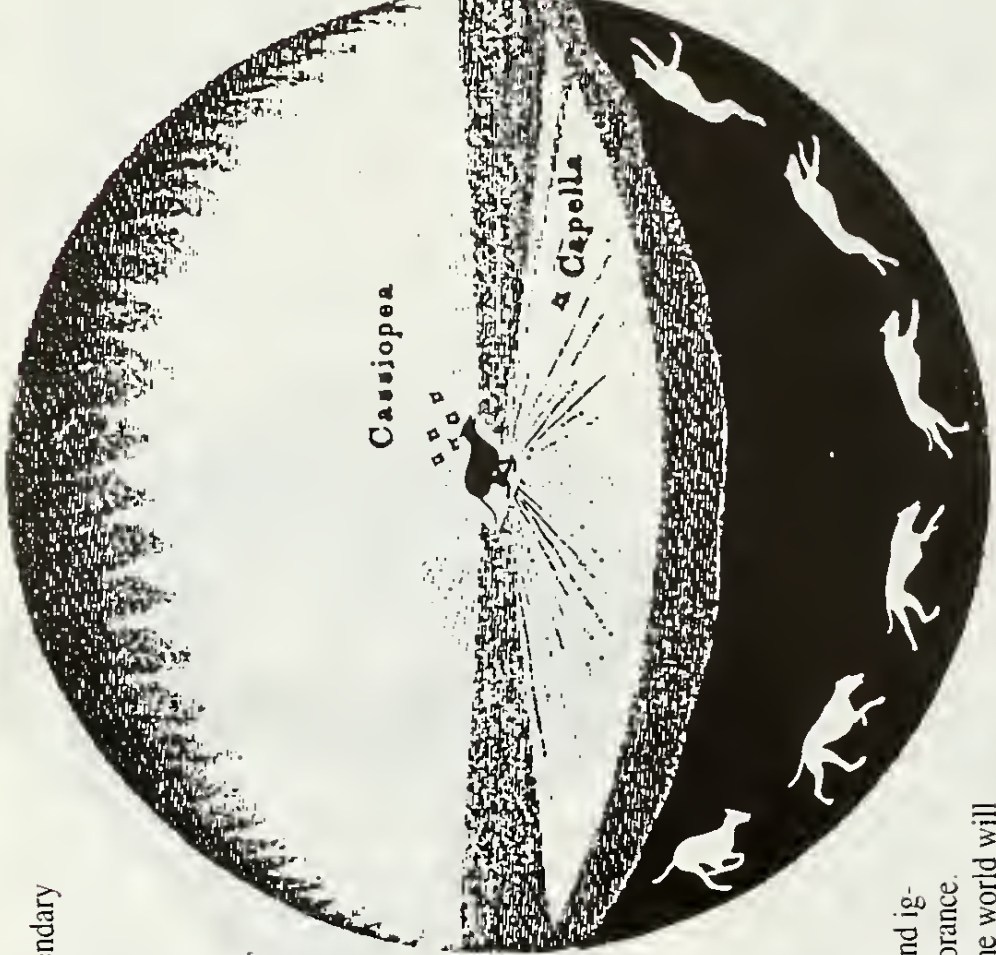
HIGH FRONTIERS: Do you consider yourself in the same league as Bob Dylan or Mick Jagger as far as tenure on the scene, being a veteran of the 60s?

SKYE SAXON: No. I've already passed both of them. The reason I've passed Dylan is I've done a volume of 12, I call it *Spiritual Holidays*, and in it, it's got the name of God, which is Jehova, Jovane, Joveshinvajje, and anybody that understands that name understands that if you reach through Christ then you'll find that name. I think Dylan is just on his way to finding Christ. Dylan's always been great, but I believe I've already passed Dylan. Man, for a long time, thought that if he couldn't be good, he'd be evil and he liked the word evil and put a “D” on that for devil. Devil and good and evil and ignorance and good...it all comes down to devil and ignorance, and it's all ignorance. It's not evil, it's ignorance. That's why Dylan and all the musicians around the world will have to come to me in the end. Because I'm bringing the name Jehovah.

With all the new music I've got, I just hope that I can join hands, which is what I've wanted to do for 20 years, and do music for the world. But being in his shadow? No. I'm not in anyone's shadow. I feel like I'm the King of Music.

You're really into performing again after laying low?

I'm into all kinds of music. They're talking about taking me into Vegas. I want to do things like Sinatra does. I ran for President once. I don't know if many people know. I ran against Nixon and McGovern.



Did you catch the Live Aid concert?

Yeah, I was sorry I wasn't on it. Music is about an 8 billion dollar business. I want to cut into about 35% of it and with that I want to feed the world.

We just did a reunion album, and in it I used Darold and Rick Andreas, and the legendary Mark Bonfire who wrote “Born to be Wild.” And I used Rainbow Ray Oxidizer and myself. I'm holding that album until I get...I'm asking for a million dollars, and if I don't get it I'll just put it out in foreign markets first.

Most of the people I know, man, they just drink beer. I think marijuana is a sacred herb and it was given to you by god and by the Constitution and it was taken away from ya by J. Edgar Hoover.

Do you think Madonna smokes marijuana?

I'd like to get high with her. We're all brothers and sisters. We've all got to go back to the same place. You're not in touch with her, though.

No. I have pictures. I'd like to do some shows. I'd like to play with everybody. When I first started, I played with everybody there was. I didn't play with The Stones, because I blew them away in my early days and I didn't get another shot.

Do you believe in the Armageddon prophecy in the Bible?

I'd even go further than that. I think we'll end up as blood in the streets unless we have more peace and love in the music, more love and flowerpower, and people realizing that heaven's within them and that god loves every one of them.

Taking off on the blood in the streets...how do you see that unraveling?

I think it's not going to unravel. I think flowerpower's too powerful, and it's going to stop it.

Blood is blue until it's exposed to the air. Then it turns red.

That's not true. It's dark red in the body. Only in a vegetarian would you find blood start to change colors. My blood is pink, but if I was a vegetarian for maybe 20 more years, it would turn into a liquid just like water. It's actually really bad for people to take transfusions, because they're picking up everybody's karma in their blood.

Everybody needs to be a vegetarian to survive, period.

Ovo-vegetarian?

Just don't eat red meat. Let me tell ya, fish is a transition. You can eat it now because of what's coming down in the energies. Chicken, I wouldn't mess with. It's got too many poisons and pesticides. The only thing I really exist on is fruit—mangos and papayas...I like to get stuff that isn't sprayed.

How do you get stuff that isn't sprayed? Do you bless the pesticides off?

You bless them off and wash them off. It's the power in your hands. Each one of your fingers represents a certain power. I'm not at liberty to tell ya, but if everybody knew the power in their hands, they could raise the battleships that have been sunk.

How important was the drug scene to The Seeds in the 60s? Did you feel close to that?
Seeds were never into drugs. Drugs, to me, are in a drugstore. Marijuana is a sacred herb! It's planted in 127 countries, or so, around the world. God planted it everywhere. It's also the Burning Bush that Moses looked for.

Let me ask you this. Along with this resurgence of people interested in the sound and The Seeds, there's a resurgence of people into acid. Was acid important to the band?

Well, I think everyone should take acid once. It's like the living Bible... Everything's living, and tells you not to abuse any form of life. If you're going to kill anything, kill flies.

Have you taken LSD a lot?

If I'd taken lots of LSD, I surely wouldn't say it here. You can get enough LSD out of just looking at the sun. There's enough power in the sun.

Do you look at the sun a lot?

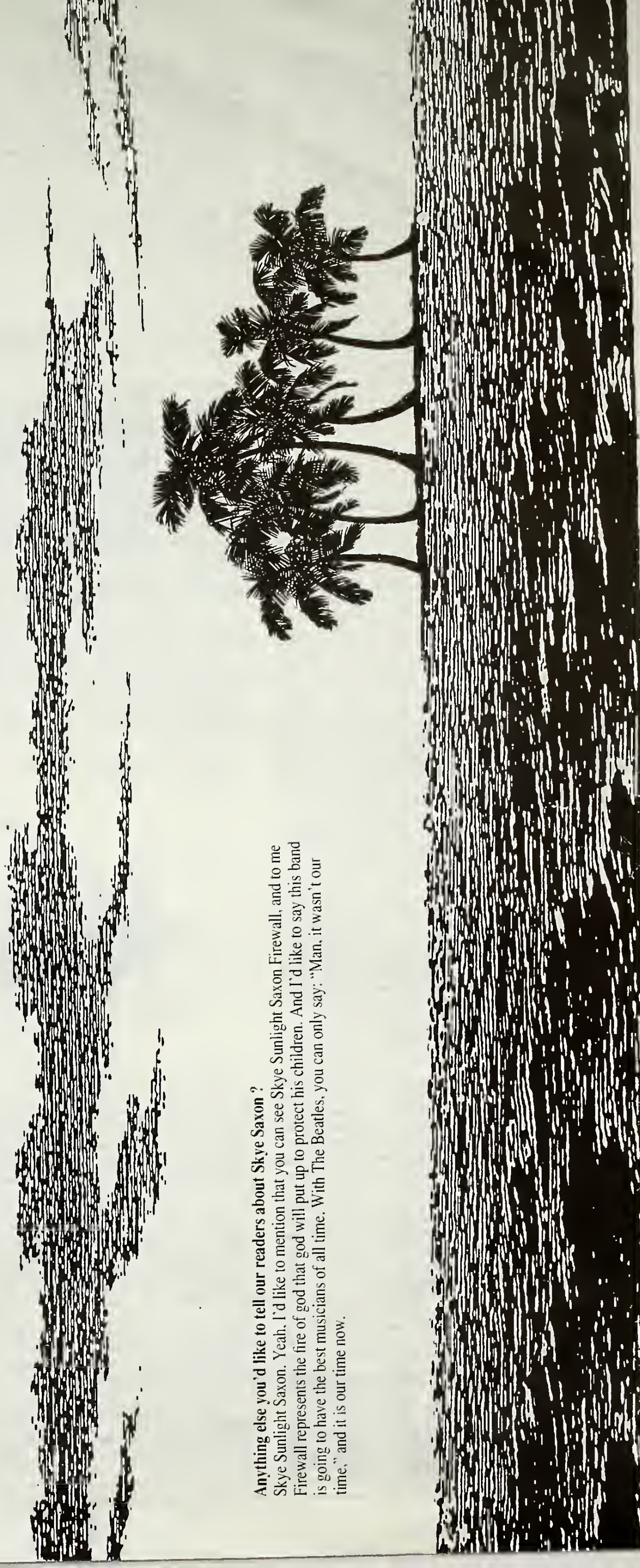
I do, yeah. And I'm a vegetarian. I've been a vegetarian for 20 years.

There's a lot of sun-worshipper consciousness now. Do you feel sort of a pioneer of that?

Well, the sun's always been here. I can only emanate it. I can tell you that the sun's only a hole in the sky.

There's a kingdom of God beyond it. And the reason the sun is hot is it's got gasses throughout the universe which act like two big magnifying glasses, so that when you pass through them, that's what gives you the heat. But if the magnifying glasses weren't there in the universe, you wouldn't even see the sun. It'd just be a dot. The sun. It's the home of the father. It's the home of all of us.

This interview was contributed by Greg Turner, a rock writer whose work has appeared in Creem, Spin and other publications.



Anything else you'd like to tell our readers about Skye Saxon?

Skye Sunlight Saxon. Yeah, I'd like to mention that you can see Skye Sunlight Saxon Firewall, and to me Firewall represents the fire of god that god will put up to protect his children. And I'd like to say this band is going to have the best musicians of all time. With The Beatles, you can only say: "Man, it wasn't our time," and it is our time now.

gans... others like to strike whips on the buttocks, heels, feet, back, etc.. Also strange fancies in regard to colours are observed..."— Anyway, in the fifth "chant," about the slaying of the *eidolon* or double, he refers explicitly to the spider's magnetic spell over his cerebro-spinal nervous system going on nearly two lustra (or ten years) and twice he refers to this spider specifically as a tarantula.

H.F.: But how can all these Ph.D. lit. crit. types have missed this?

AK: Ah, but they lack angelic guidance! Once you have the key... you know Rimbaud was always boasting about having the key. "Only I have the key to this savage parade!" he cried. And: "I am an inventor... a musician, even, who has found something that may be the key to love." But it is in *Une Saison en Enfer* that he gives the most sustained blow-by-blow description of tarantula venom intoxication, "To drink strong drink, as strong as molten ore," he cries. "My heart has been stabbed by grace. Ah! I hadn't thought this would happen... I may die of earthly love, die of devotion... Ah! my lungs burn, my temples roar! My heart... my arms and legs... Fire! Fire at me! Here! I'll give myself up! I'll kill myself! I'll throw myself beneath the horses' hooves! Ah!... I'll get used to it." This last suggests that he had consciously undertaken this ordeal, that this was the first of a series of Orphic "investigations" (his word) that summer at Roche in the old granary where his mother and sister Vitalie pressed their ears against the doors to hear the passionate cries within — a poetomachia of one!

H.F.: Is that recorded somewhere?

AK: Yes—it's in Vitalie's journal. He shut himself up in the granary for weeks, writing *A Season in Hell* and all they heard of him were "moans, sobs, cries of rage, oaths, blasphemies and jeers." In "A Night in Hell" he actually opens by saying "J'ai avalé une fameuse gorgée de poison"—"I've just swallowed a terrific mouthful of poison"—and goes on to record meticulously the physical and psychological effects of the venom. "My entrails are on fire. The violence of the venom twists my arms and legs, deforms me, drives me to the ground. I die of thirst, I suffocate, I cannot cry. This is Hell, eternal torment! See how the fire rises! I burn as I must... A man who wants to mutilate himself is certainly damned, isn't he?" And he goes on ranting and expostulating. Then: "My hallucinations are endless... I shall say no more about this; poets and visionaries would be jealous. I am the richest one of all, a thousand times, and I will hoard it like the sea. Oh God—the clock of life stopped but a moment ago. I am no longer within the world. Theology is certainly accurate; hell is certainly down below—and heaven is up on high. Ecstasy, nightmare, sleep, is a nest of flames... I will tear the veils from every mystery—mysteries of religion or of nature, death, birth, the future, the past, cosmogony and nothingness. I am a master of phantasmagoria. Listen! Every talent is mine!... Shall I give you Afric chants, belly dancers? Shall I vanish, Shall I dive after the ring?... Shall I? I will make gold, and medicines... Put your faith in me, then; faith comforts, it guides and it heals. Come unto me all of you—even the little children—let me console you, let me pour out my heart for you—my miraculous heart!" This fearful gamut of emotions is typical of tarantula venom intoxication—the messianizing, the grandiosity, the sweeping cosmic dioramas. Having experienced something of this myself, on a combination of adam, 2CB, and acid, I immediately recognized the utter authenticity of it. Rimbaud goes on in his *Délires II: Alchimie du Verbe* to describe quite methodically, how he went about forging a new poetic language of all the senses. "I began it as an investigation. I turned silences and nights into words. What was unutterable, I wrote down. I made the whirling world stand still." In the section "Faim," he speaks of the "bindweed's (morning glory's) gay venom." Significantly, in the recently published *brouillou* or rough draft, I found that it was a spider, in fact "the Romantic spider" (*l'araignée romantique*)—that he had originally written but that he substituted "morning glory" in the published form.

"Heureuse la taupe, sommeil de toute la virginité!" he cries. "Happy the mole, slumber of (ritual) virginity!" *L'Herbe à la taupe* is *Datura* and mole's hearts eaten were said in Pliny to confer the gift of prophecy. He goes on to describe the damage to his nervous system: "It affected my health. Terror loomed ahead. I would fall again and again into a heavy sleep, which lasted several days at a time, and getting up I continued with the same sad dreams: I was ripe for death and my weakness led me down dangerous roads to the edge of the world, and of Cimmeria, home of whirlwinds and darkness." And worst of all, he mourns the loss of that animating force in human existence: *Desire*.

H.F.: Ah, *Desire*. I imagine this brings us back to Dylan.

AK: Precisely! It is, in fact, the album on which Dylan most clearly spells out his use of tarantula venom. The album cover features Dylan dressed in the manner of a young *Rom*—the gypsy look he favored during The Rolling Thunder Tour. In the liner notes he himself wrote he says "Where do I begin... on the heels of Rimbaud moving like a dancing bullet through the hot New Jersey night filled with venom and wonder."

H.F.: But surely that's figurative?

AK: That's what Dylan's counting on us assuming. Dylan's got a lot of hubris, but he doesn't really want to give it away.

H.F.: But still, I haven't heard anything really unambiguous.

AK: Oh, you want something unambiguous? Well, then there's Rimbaud's *Poison Perdu* ("Forgotten Poison") published and authenticated by Verlaine in *La Cravache* in 1888 but, strangely, left out of almost every edition of his work since.

The opening stanzas describe a typical Pierrot Lunaire scene of taking tea on the balcony under the moonlight. Stanza three says: "Pricked into the edge of the blue curtain shines a pin with a head of gold, like a large insect that sleeps. The point of the pin is tempered

or quenched (*trempeé*) in a sharp poison. I take you—be prepared for me at the hours of the desires of death."

H.F.: What does the pin symbolize?

AK: I don't think it's symbolic at all. I think it was used to draw blood from the tarantula. Lorca uses it similarly only it's an old rusty pin instead of a gold-headed pin. In "Double Poem of Lake Eden" he cries: "Horned dwarf, let me pass through to the wood of yawnings and stretchings and exhilarated jumps. For I know the most secret use of an old rusty pin and I know the horror of wide open eyes in the tangible surface of the dish."

H.F.: Who's the horned dwarf?

AK: The *duende* of course, and it's a rusty pin because rust had occult meaning to the gypsies, and the dish probably referred to lecanomancy—divination through gazing at a basin of water.

H.F.: Most ingenious. But is it true?

AK: Well, probably only Philip Cummings could say for sure. He's the young American poet Lorca had met at the *Residencia* in Madrid and was visiting at Lake Eden—his family cabin. He's now just over eighty and still going strong And though I talked to him yesterday on the telephone, I hesitated somehow to broach the subject of spider venom!

H.F.: What makes you think he would know?

AK: The poems written at that period were clearly written under the influence of tarantula venom. Look at *Cielo Vivo* or *Danza de la Muerte*. Also, Lorca wrote Angel del Rio from Eden Mills: "Hidden among the ferns I found a distaff covered with spiders... Cognac is urgent for my poor heart." He must have taken a supply back to New York City for he writes, "The mask! Lo, the mask! Spitting wilderness venom over New York's imperfect despair!" Many people have compared Lorca's *Poet in New York* with Rimbaud's *Saison en Enfer*. John Crow describes his mode of working in those months—and it's strikingly reminiscent of Lautréamont: "When he settled down to write poetry in the early morning hours of New York after midnight it was with the strained voice, the high key, the midnight fervours of nostalgia burning deep in the darkness. And the picture was no salutary sight." "With an A and an E and an I knifing into my throat" cried Lorca. "I am a wounded pulse probing what lies on the other side." And after the paroxysms of the night, whether spent in love-making or poetic composition, the prostration of the dawn—"the desires of death"—see "He died at Dawn" or Rimbaud's *Matinée d'ivresse* ("This poison will stay in our veins even when, as the fanfares depart, we return to our former disharmony") and the physical exhaustion and neuro-endocrine depletion where he's left as immobile as a statue (see "Longing of a Statue").

TARANTULA.



H.F.: But you said he began taking tarantula venom years before—

AK: Yes, but it reached a crescendo in the savage surrealism of "A Poet in New York". He must have tried it at least by 1920 for he writes then of "spider of silence, spider of oblivion" and was early fascinated by the insect world—something he had in common with Rimbaud and Lautréamont who were weaned on Dr. Chenu's "Encyclopédie Naturelle." Lorca's first play *The Butterfly's Evil Spell* was all about cockroaches! And the cicada was a favorite metaphor for those artists who exploded in heavenly sound and light. "Let my heart be a cicada," he cries "Let it die, singing slowly, wounded by the blue heaven." In his lecture on "Cante Jondo" he writes of the great cantaores burning themselves out: "They were immense interpreters of the popular heart, who destroyed their own hearts, among the storms of feeling. Almost all of them died a death of the heart, that is they exploded like enormous cicadas." So the fascination was there with the whole phenomenology of the soul, states of poetic rapture, extreme states of passion and madness all associated with insects. Plato in *Phaedrus* speaks of the four forms of divine madness: poetic madness, Bacchic madness, prophetic madness and the madness of love and it is the whole panoply that we get with tarantula venom.

H.F.: In the book, you say that Lorca made a surrealistic film about his tarantula venom trips.

AK: Yes, he wrote the silent film scenario called "Trip to the Moon". He teamed up with a young Mexican film maker, Emilio Amero, whom he met in New York. Lorca had been devastated by Bunuel supplanting him in Dali's affections (that was the *crise de coeur* in

1928 that prompted his trip to New York.) He had seen "Un chien Andalou" which Bunuel and Dali collaborated on and must have decided to go them one better. All the favorite Lorca themes are here: the boy in the saltimbanque suit, the Gypsy spook Ruelejunda crying tears of blood, the moon emerging from a skull, fish palpitating in agony, frogs, close ups of male and female sexual parts. The protagonist, the thunderstruck man with veins painted on his body, must have been Lorca himself on tarantula venom—his "trip to the moon" (he reportedly made six "trips to the moon" in this period). And the name "Elena, Helena" that flashes on the screen and fades into screams must surely refer to Helena Diakonoff, or "Gala" who had, by that time, definitively supplanted him as Dali's great love. Frustrated love is the dominant theme.

H.F.: Fascinating! I'd never heard of this film.

AK: Few people have. The Spanish original is still Amero's possession. He would probably know—wherever he is—about Lorca's tarantula venom habit. Cummings must have known but we can bet he wouldn't tell us—not the man who destroyed the packet of manuscripts Lorca entrusted him with the admonition to keep them safe. We'll never know what they contained because he destroyed them as soon as he heard of the poet's death—after first reading them. "They were dreadful," he said laconically. "I burned them."

H.F.: What a crime. But surely there's some other link.

AK: Well, of course Dali knows all. If only *Vanity Fair* had asked about tarantula venom instead of the Rape of Europa. Lorca was madly in love with Dali from their student days at the *Residencia*. As Dali said in a recent interview: "Lorca was in love with me—you know this? He had this tremendous love of only men and Dali is very young, and beautiful, and he's crazy about me! Crazy! Crazy! Crazy!"

H.F.: How Daliesque! Where'd you get that?

AK: In *Explosion of the Swan*, an interview published by Black Sparrow Press. And here's a picture of them at the beach. They spent several summers together at Cadaqués but in 1928 Bunuel usurped him in Dali's affections and he plunged into a deep depression—he was particularly stung by Dali's calling his work retrogressive. This depression reached a climax in the spring of 1929 when he joined a religious brotherhood, the *Confradia de Santa Maria de la Alhambra*. In Holy Week he actually headed the procession of penitents in Granada, wearing a hooded penitential robe and carrying the cross!

H.F.: Holy Toledo!

AK: (laughs) No, but close. Of course, he was innately extravagant and manic-depressive. Most people remember him as a charmer, gentle, *sympatico*, always "on", but Dali describes another side of Lorca: "The poetic phenomenon in its entirety and 'in the raw' presented itself before me in flesh and bone, confused, blood-red, viscous and sublime, quivering with a thousand fires of darkness and *subterranean biology*."

H.F.: So you think they were exploring this world of subterranean biology together?

AK: I think that's inevitable—though of course Dali would never admit to an exogenous source of inspiration. "I don't take hallucinogens!" he cried. "I am a hallucinogen!" But his surreal universe; his paintings for *Les Chants de Maldoror*; the "blood is sweeter than honey" first Communion incident from *The Secret Life*; the painting "Spider in the Afternoon"; an article that appeared in 1941 in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, "Spiders—that's what fascinates Dali most about Virginia," all argue to the contrary.

H.F.: How did they take it?

AK: Lorca refers repeatedly to a pin: "the most secret use of an old rusty pin" or "On a pin's point my love is spinning!" I think they were puncturing the dorsum of the spiders' abdomen lightly with a pin—and the blood or hemolymph would spurt out without permanently injuring the spider. The hemolymph of spiders is green—blueish green when fresh oxidizing to brownish green—because the hemocyanin molecule is based on copper instead of iron as in mammals. The meaning of the line most often identified with Lorca—and yet puzzlingly cryptic—"Verde que te quiero verde"—"Green how I want you green"—in the *Sonnambular Ballad* is now patently obvious.

H.F.: And you've got the patent on hemolymph extraction?

AK: Oh, I'd never do it!—It's simply too toxic to the heart. It's probably what did Jim Morrison in.

H.F.: Really?

AK: No, that's just a wild rumor! My wild rumor. But he's fairly Orphic and a great admirer of Rimbaud's.

H.F.: You keep using the word Orphic and though it's pretty late in the game, could you explain what you mean by it?

AK: Ah, orphism. This could be never-ending. John Warden says that given the will and ingenuity, anything can be shown to be Orphic. As a myth, it contains dozens of sub-motifs: the magician-poet who can tame the forces of nature, the descent into Hades, the loss of the beloved, the last minute breaking of a taboo, the dismemberment by incensed rampaging females (like Pentheus), the decapitated oracular head, the power to charm beasts and cure the bites and stings of venomous animals: the stellio, the adder and the tarantula. One interesting aspect that has not been sufficiently emphasized is the misogynist character of Orpheus (post-Eurydice), the fact that he addressed himself solely to men (like Robert Bly). Women were forbidden to participate in Orphic rites or even enter into the sacred precinct around his shrine. In Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Orpheus advocates pederastic love. But still the most important aspect of the Orpheus story is his ability to cure through the power of music and sound. He could halt the five archetypal tortures (Tantalus, Ixion, Tityos, Danaides, Sisyphus) and counteract the madness caused by the siren's

song with his more potent music.

H.F.: So Orpheus represents the musician as Healer?

AK: Yes, but not merely a medium or channel; he's a rigorously trained thaumaturge who uses his mastery of musical tones, modes, vowel sounds and colours to draw down the different planetary influences. And as a seer or prophet he was master of the art of divination through mirrors or basins of water—the encounter with the double—a higher-octave Narcissus. The psychosomatic effects of the eight different modes—Phrygian, Lydian, Dorian, etc. is a vast subject—too vast to go into here. The vibrational affinities between the vowels, colours, tones and planets goes back to Gnostic incantations and is described in Empedocles' *Purifications* and Plato's *Charmides*. The seven Greek vowels were magical symbols of the music of the spheres and were uttered by the initiate to intensify the incantation or used as amulets. Rimbaud, in his enigmatic *Voyelles*, combined the vowels with colours, alchemical symbolism and tarantula imagery to create a real tour-de-force. "A, black belt, hairy with bursting flies"—the black belt referring to the characteristic marking on the ventral side of the tarantula; E, white—sand, the tarantula's habitat; I, crimson—blood, rage; U, green—divine peace; O, violet—the angelic or transcendent. (The last three referring to the qualitatively different kinds of tarantula venom trips). Rimbaud was preternaturally conscious of his orphic calling from the age of fourteen—and conscious of the grueling discipline involved. "Careful, mind," he writes in *The Impossible*. "Don't rush madly after salvation. Train yourself!" "La science que j'entreprends est une science distincte de la poésie," said Lautréamont in his *Poesies*.

The soul of Orpheus was thought to successively incarnate in Homer, Pythagoras, Ennius, then (after a lapse of 1600 years) in Marsilio Ficino. Ficino, who wrote *The Book of Life*, a manual of self-cultivation, and was patronized by Lorenzo de' Medici, played an Orphic lyre emblazoned with a picture of Orpheus and sang the ancient Orphic hymns with incredible sweetness. Cosimo de' Medici invited him to come down to the villa for the weekend and added "And don't forget to bring your lyre when you come." Lorca must certainly have incarnated the soul of Orpheus in this century. He wrote: "In a century of zeppelins and stupid deaths I sob at my piano dreaming of the Handelian mist and I create verses very much my own, singing the same to Christ as to Buddha, to Mohammed, and to Pan. For a lyre I have my piano and, instead of ink, the sweat of yearning, yellow pollen of my inner lily and my great love." In the Renaissance, *humanitas* is defined as the capacity for love, and the effect of Orpheus' song was to lead man to love. Love is the power that produces harmony in all things—Love is "inventive, double-natured, holding the keys to everything." Double natured, like sacred and profane Venus, like the two musics of Urania and Polyhymnia. And Orpheus, having suffered to such an extreme, is endowed with the *furor amatorius* which can lead man to a state of joy.

H.F.: Where is our Orpheus today?

AK: I suspect that he'll come out of the ranks of Rock music. We are so close to an understanding of music and affective states, music as healer and purifier. With the incredible sophistication of acoustic technology, the resources of the Rock Industry, and the surprising intelligence of some of the people within it, it is just a matter of time before Orpheus' soul incarnates again.

H.F.: There was no mention at all of Orpheus at that "Ritual and Rapture" Conference last month. ("Ritual and Rapture: From Dionysus to the Grateful Dead" sponsored by U.C. Berkeley featured mythologist Joseph Campbell and Grateful Dead drummer Mickey Hart.)

AK: I know—I thought that was remarkable! Mickey Hart's writing a book: *On the Edge of Magic*, but he's still on the edge. Both he and Jerry Garcia professed themselves to be essentially mediums. Orphism is the next stage beyond Dionysiac possession, beyond catharsis. It requires soul-suffering and transcendence, then deep study and ritual practice.

H.F.: Are you suggesting that rock musicians start hitting the books?

AK: Not necessarily, but there is a fantastic treasury of ancient manuscripts, housed at the University of Texas at Austin. John L... was just telling me about it. He delved into it a bit a few years ago when he was writing a score for a film on Kepler's "Music of the Spheres."

H.F.: What does it contain? Incantations on old mummy wrappings, that sort of thing?

AK: Lots of Renaissance musical treatises—survivals and systematizations of Pythagorean lore. He said there were really bizarre fantastic things there—charts, anatomical drawings showing different modes or musical tones streaming through nerve fibers and plexi or resonating in ventricles: five floors of the stuff; they plundered Europe after the war, brought it in by the railroad carload. Somebody should really begin looking seriously at the musical material.

H.F.: Or frivolously!

AK: Frivolously, even. Also, there's a semi-reformed cranial surgeon up in Santa Rosa, Joel Alter, who now has a holistic health clinic where he's working with sonic resonances in healing. He claims that musical vibrations and vowel sounds produce standing waves in the cerebrospinal fluid in the ventricles that actually mediate the production of neuro-hormones.

H.F.: Are there any rock artists who are implementing these discoveries in their music?

AK: You tell me. You know the rock scene far better than I. Is anyone consciously using musical energies in an Orphic way?

H.F.: It's hard to say. You were probably right earlier when you said that the primary impulse of most rock has been more Dionysian.

They're into catharsis, they're into release—release from stress, sexual frustration, social tensions, whatever. And they're into bacchanalian celebration... Jagger, Patti Smith, Jim Morrison all made direct references to Dionysianism at one time or another. I'd say most of the powerful performers these days are post-modern ironists—like David Byrne, Bowie, Laurie Anderson—not particularly Orphic. But I can think of several people whose works I would check, if I were you, for Orphic elements... Peter Gabriel, Van Morrison, Todd Rundgren, Kate Bush...

AK: Oh I loved Kate Bush's *Hounds of Love*. It's really quite ecstatic. H.F.: I heard that she incorporated a lot of Gurdjieff's musical theories in that album. They might be based on Orphic notions.

AK: One record that impressed me recently—in more ways than one—was the new double album by This Mortal Coil. It's got some distinctly Orphic elements to it.



H.F.: Oh, is that the one you were telling me about with Tarantula on it?

AK: Yes, someone gave me a copy. He'd heard the refrain "Tarantula... Tarantula" coming over the airwaves in the dead of night and leapt out of bed to write down the title. It's called *Filigree and Shadow*—doubtless a reference to Moorish architecture. The lyrics cover all the basic leitmotifs of tarantismo—the shining staring eyes, (in fact, they're on the cover), the initial numbness or prostration, the mask, the double, the thunder (Rimbaud's *tempête*, Lautréamont's *tourbillon*, Patti Smith's hurricane), the sense that one's another person—"another person living in a parallel reality" is the way Harold of the Flying Tarantulas put it, "Je est un autre" were Rimbaud's words. The first verse runs:

"I'm living but I'm feeling numb,
you can see it in my stare
I wear a mask so closely now
and I don't know who I am
This poison wells inside of me
eroding me away
I've noticed in other eyes
things closing in...
But when the thunder breaks
it breaks for you and me
Tarantula, tarantula"

The last verse ends rather abruptly:

"My world's under a sentence of death
I was born under (grass) clouds
But when the pressure gets too much for me
I bite!

I - I - I - I - E - I - E - I - E - I - E - O - O - O - O - O"

This kind of sudden, quirky, animal-like violence is often described in clinical reports of tarantismo, or of possession states. The "squared mouth" of the Greek mask of tragedy, the "bouche carrée" of Lautréamont; the characteristic animal howls, and eeriest of all, a peculiar "yelp"—... "the stylized cry of the tarantulees, the 'crisis cry', an *ahiii* uttered with various modulations, that sounds more like the yelping of a dog than a human cry." (Gilbert Rouget, DeMartino). Darwin has an illuminating discussion of the paroxysms of rage, grief, terror and joy and how they produce strange involuntary sounds depending on the different muscle groups powerfully contracted.

H.F.: This is fascinating, and clearly relevant, but is such music orphic?

AK: Well, it's probably pre-Orphic. Not having looked at those incunabula at Austin, I don't really know what Orphic means. The music Rimbaud composed on his death bed and played on a hand organ was probably Orphic.

H.F.: Oh? What's this? I've never heard of Rimbaud composing music.

AK: Well, none of it survives unfortunately—we'll never know what it was like—except that it was described as "supernal fugues of essences and quintessences." He probably played it to heat himself in those weeks in Marseilles after they amputated his leg. Anyone who has even contemplated taking tarantula venom should read his sister Isabelle's description of those last days—the hellish sufferings, "the incessant wails and indescribable despair." The most terrible, exquisite pathos I have ever read—his damnation foreshadowed years earlier: "Hadn't I once a youth that was lovely, heroic, fabulous—something to write down on pages of gold?... I was the creator of every feast,

every triumph, every drama. I tried to invent new flowers, new planets, new flesh, new languages. I thought that I had acquired supernatural powers. Ha! I have to bury my imagination and my memories! What an end to a splendid career as an artist and storyteller! I! I called myself a magician, an angel, free from all moral constraint!... I am sent back to the soil to seek some obligation, to wrap gnarled reality in my arms!"

H.F.: So, have we said it sufficiently loud and clear yet? For all you kids out there in Radioland—Don't, I repeat, do not try tarantula venom!

AK: It permanently imprints the nervous system with a manic-depressive syndrome—and it's probably carcinogenic.

H.F.: There are much better things out there!

AK: Or on the drafting boards—or the computer simulation modelling screens. Anyway, psycho-nutrition is where it's at! And be sure to tone up your thymus glands!

H.F. So back to Orpheus—any candidates for Orpheus out there?

AK: Well, being a child of the sixties, I kind of thought it might be Dylan. His life follows the typical Orphic pattern—the descent into Hades, the loss of his wife Sarah, the retirement into the wilds of Thrace (read upper New York State), and finally this year his resurfacing after the long Rip van Winkle-like hibernation. I thought he might be about to reveal his "gnawing secret"—the "hydre intime" of tarantula venom use—when I heard his 1986 summer concert tour was called "True Confessions."

H.F.: Gnawing secret?

AK: Well, those were actually Henry Miller's words describing Rimbaud: "The *hydre intime* eats away until even the core of one's being becomes sawdust and the whole body is like unto a temple of desolation." Desolation, damnation of the soul—some of the meanings that have been attached to the "Ten of Swords."

H.F.: That's the name of the new bootleg Dylan album. I wondered where that came from.

AK: Significantly, out on Tarantula Records. Dylan seems to have a very loyal and protective entourage, but clearly somebody out there knows. Patti Smith in *Babel* writes "Have you seen dylan's dog? it got wings, it can fly, if you speak of it to him, it's the only time dylan can't look you in the eye."

H.F.: But damnation of the soul? Isn't that a bit strong?

AK: Well, he said in *Tarantula* that he'd made a Faustian pact with the devil to get away from Middle America. The gypsies attach a particularly malign significance to the ten of swords. In Crowley's *Book of Thoth*, it is ruled by the sun in Gemini: (Dylan's sign) and represents "the culmination of unmitigated energy... the ruin of the intellect and even of all mental and moral qualities."

H.F.: I don't see any evidence of ruined intellect.

AK: Look, I'm just quoting. The card itself is reminiscent of the pierced heart in alchemical and cante jondo symbolism—anguish, dissolution. Rachel Pollack has the best discussion of it. "You are physically ruined by the intensity," she writes in *The 78 Degrees of Wisdom*. "Your mind has been stretched to its outer limit... The 10 swords in a man's body including one in his ear suggest hysteria and the idea 'no one has ever suffered as much as me'." "Non est dolor sicut dolor meus": Dylan has written this in many ways especially in his born-again lyrics.

H.F.: Oh, have you found evidence in his lyrics?...

AK: Look, I'm into grand synthesis—not minute textual exegesis! But there are a few things—"I know all about poison, I know all about fiery darts" he says in "What Can I Do For You?" In "Where Are You Tonight (Journey Through Dark Heat)" he says: "The truth was obscure, too profound and too pure, to give it you had to explode" and "I fought with my twin, that enemy within, 'til both of us fell by the way, Horseplay and disease is killing me by degrees while the law looks the other way."

H.F.: Horseplay must be about heroin—his disease?

AK: Well, in the same period he wrote "Legionnaire's Disease" which clearly describes tarantismo—the title slyly referring to North Africa via the French Foreign Legion. "Some say it was radiation, some say there was acid on the microphone, some say a combination turned their hearts to stone, But whatever it was, it drove them to their knees. Oh, Legionnaire's disease, I wish I had a dollar for everyone that died that year" (Edie Sedgwick? Jim Morrison? Jimi Hendrix?) "Got 'em hot by the collar, plenty an old maid's shed a tear: Now within my heart, it sure put on a squeeze. Oh that Legionnaire's disease."

H.F.: Leary slammed Dylan for his "sniveling and snarling" in *NeuroPolitics*—said that he almost single-handedly undermined the Aquarian idealism of the Psychedelic Movement.

AK: Yes. He called him "that Old Testament Masochism Bob," but he also said he was mutating rapidly. But Allen Ginsberg said it best of all in the liner notes for *Desire* (which by the way, was subtitled *Songs of Redemption*): "loved like a thin terrified guru by every seeker in America who heard that long-vowelled voice in heroic ecstatic triumphant 'how does it feel'... And behind it all the vast lone space... of mindful conscious compassion. Enough Person revealed to make Whitman's whole nation weep."





KATE BUSH'S PSYCHEDELIC PRAYERS

As the neo-psychedelic movement continues to gather steam (who would have thought that a British trio with a name like The Dream Academy could push an enigmatic song like "Life In A Northern Town" into the American top ten?), I am becoming more and more troubled by the relatively small boxes these bands have constructed to live in. I mean, where is it written that an eighties psychedelic band has to utilize the conventions of the sixties psychedelic bands? And of course, if it is written somewhere, since when did worthwhile musicians give a shit about what someone else thought they should sound like? Like, the thing that made all those bands exciting was that they were mining a new vein. If you study your history, you will see that the death of New Wave was its inability to go anywhere with the 64-66 Beatles/Mersey sound that they were using as a launchpad. Is psychedelia going to be content to do the same thing with the 67-69 sound that it is using? Just wondering.

One artist who is never linked with the psychedelic resurgence is Kate Bush. For my money, though, her music is organically psychedelic in a way that totally goes beyond surface aural appearances. No twelve-strings or jangly guitars, no Nico or Mouse vocals, and (My God!) she writes on a piano. But it isn't style that makes me think Kate the most psychedelic pop musician alive. It's the effect of the sound on my body.

Though I think her first album (*The Kick Inside*) is the most holy-ecstatic profoundly brain-changing album produced in the last fifteen years, her latest album, *Hounds Of Love* is certainly more mature, and perhaps more importantly in this society, it is new. It is also the culmination of the efforts she has made on all the albums subsequent to the first, and side two makes her last album (*The Dreaming*) completely dispensable (except for those of you who love to program yourselves into really bumner realities).

Side one is poppy. Songs that work taken from the context of the album. But then again, if you listen to them, you get deepened. The rhythms and tones put you in spaces that usually require meditation or Adam. And what does she sing about? How about the non-spiteful twist on "Positively Fourth Street" in "Running Up That Hill (A Deal With God)"—"Is there so much hate for the ones we love?...If only I could/I'd make a deal with God!And I'd get him to swap our places!Be running up that road."

"Hounds Of Love" chronicles fear of love, while the singer in "The Big Sky" spends all of her time watching; the clouds taking shape, Ireland, God telling Noah to build an Ark...

"Cloudbusting", based on Peter Reich's (I'm Wilhelm Reich's son) *A Book Of Dreams*, closes out side one with a moving account of father/son love and the societal forces that destroy that particular relationship.

Side two, subtitled "The Ninth Wave," utilizes a lot of aural patterns and tones of *The Dreaming*, but to a much different effect. Where that album was simply a season in hell, what we've got here is a descent into, and subsequent ascent out of, those particular spaces in our consciousness that seem determined to control us and make life as ugly as possible. And where the experience of *The Dreaming* seemed merely something any sane individual would want to avoid, the effect of "The Ninth Wave" is an understanding of the importance of utilizing all experience, pleasant and unpleasant alike, as opportunities for self-knowledge (is there any other kind?). It is a bit harrowing at times, but any trip for knowledge holds out that possibility. "Do you know what?" she asks in "The Morning Fog", "I love you better now." And then she's wrapping it up. "I'll tell my mother! I'll tell my father!...I'll tell my brothers!How much I love them." And who but the most disaffected wouldn't want to be able to do that?

Charles Faris



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basking robbins

“Me and Jim went all to pieces with joy, and begun to shout whoopjamboreehoo,”

**Huck in Tom Sawyer Abroad
— Mark Twain**

In the beginning... high above the hills of Berkeley, the *High Frontiers* staff were summoned together. Present were editors R.U. Sirius, religious figure Haile Unlikely, and our colorful botanist-astrologer Queen Mu, who incidentally is the only graduate of that pedantic bartenders school unknown as Vedantic-Culinary-Research-Made-To-Elixir (V.C.R.-M.T.E.) who went on to do post-graduate field work on the curative powers of crossing tarantula venom with a twist of toadstool drops on the rocks. This healing concoction has been successfully tested and endorsed by Shamanics Anonymous as the drink of wonders preferred for its hyperactive members. Now you can see, dear readers, why Queen Mu has been gainfully employed around the *High Frontiers* office. R.U. Vedic? I want my M.T.E.!

So getting back on the juicy digestive tract, this assemblage of our staff came together with the proposed idea of how to meet up with the famed beet writer most accused of writing “like the way Dolly Parton looks,” whose novel literary style behaves like the Quantum-Inseparability-Principle of Heisenberg’s Greatest Uncertainty. We are speaking of course about author Tom Robbins. *High Frontiers*, like Tom Robbins, is interested in raising eyebrows out of complacency. What happens when the cult writer, or magazine, becomes popular enough to reach the best seller lists? Or when the underground mushrooms up? Is there a fungus among us? Tom Robbins, whose remarkable imagination and storytelling has Mark Twained our culture about the inner meaning of outlaws, red heads from Argon, hitchikers named Sissy with protracted thumbs, exiled kings who end up Jitterbugging as Einstein’s janitor a thousand years later, can now enjoy a vast readership that cuts across all levels of the Global Village without compromise of his unique style. He keeps to his own beet and still exercises his funny bone too.

High Frontiers’ own “DR. MA” a.k.a. Lawrence Gerald, our traveling correspondent, was our taster’s choice on being selected to interview Tom last Novem-

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ber. DR. MA’s credentials show that he’s also a graduate from that same bartenders school - Vedantic-Culinary-Research-Made-To-Elixir (V.C.R.-M.T.E.) and get down! He has recently returned from the first annual Ecstatic Adams Family Celebration held in, of all places, Calaveras County, Louisiana, where, we understand, many outlaws convened. The event was in honor of the outlawing (July 1, 1985) of the active molecular derivative of nutmeg and sassafras. Dr. MA said that the loaded drinks were going down faster than you could whistle Dixie and Whoopjamboreehoo! Anyway, we now present you with the Tom Robbins interview.

Dr. Ma

HIGH FRONTIERS: Have you always wanted to be a writer?

TOM ROBBINS: Since I was five years old I knew that is what I wanted to do.

Your style is dazzling. It seems like you are composing with some kind of lucid orchestra or the way the Gateful Dead are known to jam.

Oh, thank you! My model of the universe is non-linear. In writing, I like to be consistent with that model. At the same time, you do have to be lucid. If you can’t be lucid, what’s the point? Everyone uses language. Not everyone uses visual imagery. So people are willing to accept more from visual artists, because they are not messing around with their world as does a language artist.

What I’ve tried to do, having seen the limitations of a non-linear approach, is to work in a state of multi-layers. There are series in the plot which are climactic and anti-climactic and continue to build or ascend in a spiral of climax/anti-climax. There are certain feelings that I try to create to affect the reader and there are a series of effects at work in the reader’s psyche already. That’s pretty much where I begin. I try to make it up as I go along. It’s a scary way to work. Not at all secure.

So you experiment without rehearsing.

People ask me “How d’ya write a novel?” And I say, “I don’t know.” “Whaddya meant you don’t know?” Then they say, “You’ve written four!” I really don’t know how. When I begin my next one, I’ll be starting all over again. I don’t even have any prescribed notions of what a novel is supposed to be. The beginning of a book I feel like an experience inside, like a spiraling sensation, a lot of little wings, real vague, definitely a presence. If I were to sit down and really think about it, it would probably take form, but I wouldn’t want to write it then. So I try to squeeze it out like toothpaste and leave the rest marinating in my imagination. I think the ideal approach to writing is to sit down and write a sentence and see where it gets you. At times, you just feel the rhythm taking charge. The hardest part, in the beginning, is to find what voice it is going to be told in; could be as simple as the first person... is the narrator omnipotent or is it limited?

Sometimes you play yourself as Tom Robbins. For instance, the therapist to Sissy in Even Cowgirls Get The Blues, or the narrator discussing Tom Robbins, the therapist.

I enjoyed that and I had some serious artistic reasons for doing it. But if you continue to do something like that it becomes a technique or a crutch. I want to stay clear from that and continue to explore for novelty.

Sometimes when I’m too much in awe of good writing, I need to read less and assimilate more before going on. I have heard from other readers of yours similar difficulties in the beginning.

Well, a lot of people have trouble reading it since they are expecting plot development in a linear way. The way I structure plot is like one of those old-fashioned lighthouses before there was electricity. A lamp would come on in a little cubicle of the lighthouse and another would turn on somewhere else until eventually the whole thing is illuminated. Someone seeing it from a distance wouldn’t necessarily notice that it’s being filled in by all these little lights.

In Jitterbug Perfume, is the character Dr. Wiggs Dannyboy based on Timothy Leary?

Actually, Tim, who is a friend of mine, was 10% to 15% that character. The rest was made up from the pioneer biologist Rupert Sheldrake, noted for his theories on resonating morphogenetic fields, and Leonard Orr, founder of Rebirthing... and part of it’s myself too.

How did Still Life with Woodpecker come about?

There were important distinctions that I wanted to convey, such as outlaw types and criminals. I like outlaws.

What I was originally interested in was the idea of objects. Before I began that book, I wanted to write about objects in a way that has never been written before. Not just on a symbolic level, but something that had a real life function of its own. I thought, wouldn’t it be great to write a novel about what takes place in an empty room? It would have one character, three objects and no leaving of the room. That was the main idea.

So that character being Leigh-Cheri, the redheaded anti-nuker princess, is driven to hold a vigil up in her attic and to meditate on a Camel pack’s imagery of palm trees, pyramids, and the word “CHOICE.”

Yes. I had to reduce the original three objects to one that contained a few images. At the same time I started the work, I was getting over a relationship with a redheaded Aries woman and needed to write about that, too. Then I began to dovetail all this into “To Make Love Stay” as part of the narration and realized that it wasn’t going to work having just one person in a love story. The Camel pack came to mind because it is a common object that everyone sees and it has so much lore.

You reveal some unusual yet true historical research that leads to greater curiosity. (At this point Tom is pointing out, on the Camel pack I have handy, that hidden inside the camel image is the outline of a woman and a lion.)

Robert Anton Wilson has mentioned to me that he thinks the Illuminati were behind the scenes in *Still Life with Woodpecker*. He thinks that the Illuminati has historically been engaged in maintaining and circulating the pyramid symbol through both the dollar bill and the

an interview with Tom Robbins

Camel pack design. Thomas Jefferson and a nameless lithographer were two redheads selected in carrying out the tasks.

Getting back to revolutionary outlaw types, have you ever heard of Julian Beck and the Living Theatre?

Yes. When I was a teenager, I hitchhiked one weekend from Virginia up to the Theatre on 6th Ave. and 14th St. I remember meeting this beautiful girl during intermission who was playing a courtesan. Her last name was Robbins too.

Did you know that Julian died recently (September 15, 1985)?

No. I didn't know that.

*Julian was not only a revolutionary artist in the theater but also a prolific painter. One piece he did in 1957 is called *Romeo & Juliet*. It depicts a Buddha-faced image next to a mayonnaise jar. Kind of a pre-Warhol.*

Oh wonderful! I love mayonnaise! I eat so much they're gonna send me to the Mayo clinic. I think it's definitely a watershed food. People who don't go for it are destined for a Miracle Whip. They don't know what they're missing. Actually, people ought to be aware that Miracle Whip, which isn't real mayonnaise at all, is a crutch for people who aren't strong enough to handle the real thing. Mayonnaise is the one product that's better than homemade. This is an unsolicited testimonial. I always thought Cinco de Mayo was for mayonnaise. I celebrate it every year. (laughter)

So we can add on to the list, perhaps, that mayonnaise is one of the mysteries that can make love stay. You could be spreading a new tradition.

That's right!

*One of your recipes in "Woodpecker" is to tell love you are going out to Junior's Deli on Flatbush Ave., in Brooklyn, to pick up a cheesecake. You write that if love stays, it can have the cheesecake when you get back. Love will stay. Then, in *Jitterbug Perfume*, you have glorified the beet while in search of the perfect taco. Perhaps your Cinco de Mayo celebration will lead you to the opening of your own specialty food store.*

Hmm. Marinates my imagination.

You could franchise a chain of 'em. Maybe naming it "Basking Robbins!" (laughter)

It's a deal!

You have been doing a lot of traveling lately. How did you end up in Selous, Africa?

When I finished *Jitterbug Perfume*, I looked at myself in the mirror and there were big circles under my eyes. I was pale, my neck was stiff, my rear end sore after sitting down for three and a half years, and I said to myself, "Tom, what you need is a trip up the Amazon." So I asked the universe to provide. Three days later I received in the mail a letter from the director of Inter-Bar Expeditions. It said that I could have any trip in the book, free, if I would write about it. My first choice was the Amazon, but with the schedule I would have had to wait much longer. I chose Africa because it's symbolic of a rustic experience. The place gets in your blood. It's so immediate. Primal. It's where human life began.

Is the trip something you recommend?

Well, the trip was hard work, paddling rafts. It's extremely hot. Some people were miserable. Like Hermann Hesse said in *Steppenwolf*, "The magic theater is not for everyone..."

And you were recently rafting in Indonesia.

That's right. Indonesia has extreme, thick, vast jungles and wildlife. You have the sensation of a lot of eyes looking at you but you can't see them. We did see orangutans in the wild. Quite extraordinary. One day we went to an orangutan rehab center. It's a status symbol in Indonesia to have an orangutan as a pet, but it's against the law now. They take them back to this center to cure them of their human habits. We say "Get the monkey off our back." For the orangutans, it's "Get the human off their back." They are very affectionate and develop strong bonds with humans. Because of this, their own survival as a species is in jeopardy. They teach them at this center not to trust people. They are listed as an endangered species.

In Sumatra, I found these mushrooms that actually glow in the dark. They were 16 inches tall and grew from elephant dung.

Sounds tasty. Were they psychoactive?

No. But from just five of these mushrooms that I had collected, they were emitting enough light in my room to read by at night.

Amazing! I know a botanist who would love to research those dinglers!

While I was in Singapore, I went to the Raffles Hotel and stayed for a few days. It's where Joseph Conrad used to live, and Rudyard Kipling and Somerset Maugham stayed there. When I checked in, they found out I was a writer and gave me a 20% discount. I was amazed. Normally when a hotel clerk finds out you're a writer, they look at you as if... "How you gonna pay the bill." It was the first time that I ever received good treatment for being a writer. To top it off, they switched me into the best room in the hotel. It turned out to be the Hermann Hesse suite. Hesse stayed there in 1912. There's a bronze plaque on the door with photographs of him.

Ah, the Hermann Hesse suite is not for everyone. Are you going to write about any of your experiences in Indonesia?

There is an episode which I will be writing about. It is going to be called "King of the Cannibals." In one village, we got invited to an excavation ceremony. It is rare for white people to be a part of such an auspicious occasion. There were seven skulls that were laid out in view. We were honored guests and the only outsiders to visit. Musicians played ancient flutes. It turned out that I was selected to get dressed in one of their costumes, probably because I was wearing a skull cap and had a skull ring on my finger.

*Sounds like the part in *Jitterbug Perfume* when Alobar meets the shaman and partakes of a specially prepared tea.*

Yes. So, I was given betel nut to chew on, and I got

stoned and danced all day around these skulls and bones with the natives. At one point they took a long piece of cloth to cover the skulls so that just the eye sockets were visible.

Hunter Thompson said that he wanted to be the first journalist in space. He also wanted to take Vanessa Williams and wine and dine her in Johannesburg. (laughter) What, at this point, for Tom Robbins, is the ultimate goal?

Well, I'd like to take Vanessa Williams into outer space! (laughter)

Actually, what I'm interested in right now is the idea of having some kind of moratorium on the belief in an afterlife. Much of the world believing in an afterlife leads to much of the world's primary ills. An ending to this belief would increase the quality and sanctity in the life we already know we have. Nobody has proven that any of the ideas of an afterlife are true. No one knows for sure. Therefore, as long as you believe in an afterlife, you'll be willing to accept suppression, repression in this life. It would be much quicker to press the red button. I think that's one of the problems... all these old men running our country who think it doesn't matter if we use up all our natural resources since disaster is imminent and the end of the world is coming.

We can trace the Phoenician alphabet to being directly related to the maintaining of history which has resulted in that tower of babel called the atomic bomb. There was no history, as we know it, until this alphabet developed. There was a pre-historic time that, on some level, can still exist today. The notion of historical transcendence of time parallels the arrival of the Phoenician alphabet, too. The beginning of history and the experience of time has been like an imaginary arrow shot into an imaginary future.

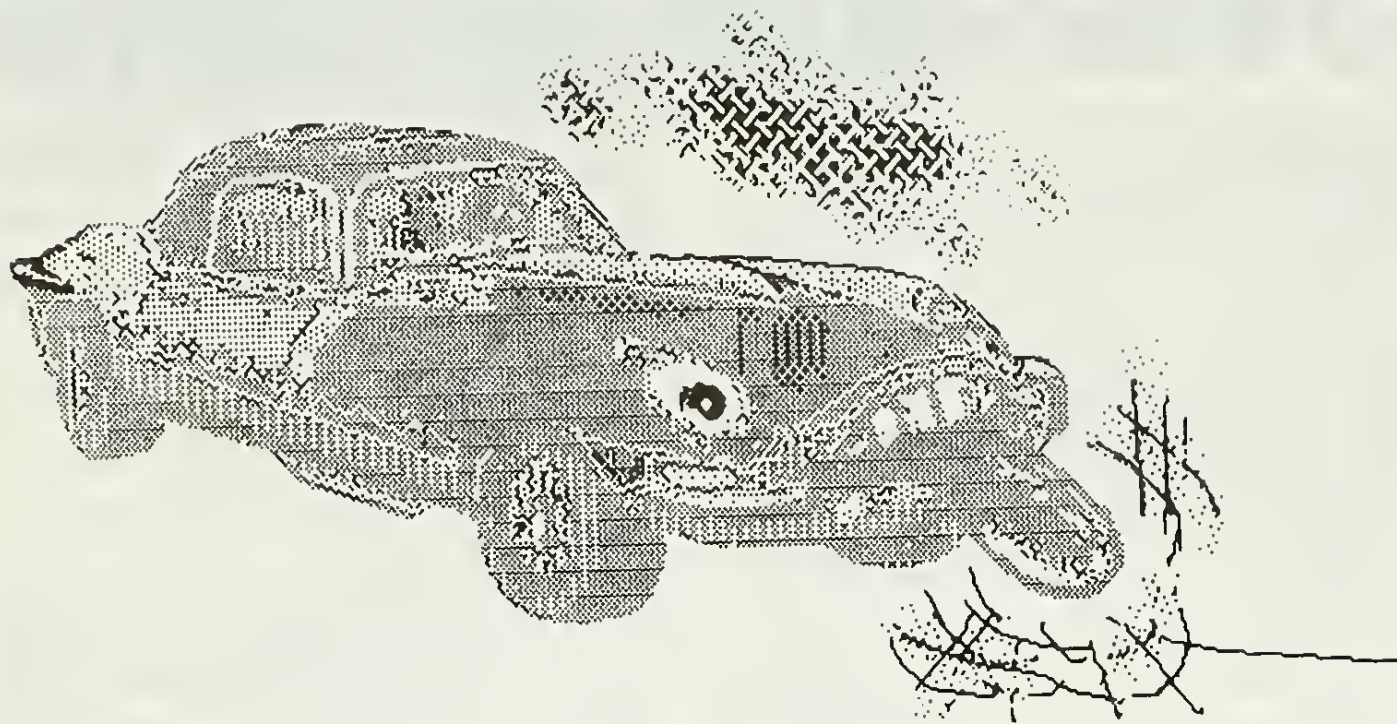
This reminds me of Chink, The Keeper of Cosmic time, and the nature of the clock people, that you write about in "Cowgirls." It's transformational, the quality of those dialogues. Come to think of it, you have the cultural and individual assumptions of time being challenged by your characters in just about every novel.

Well it's important to realize how our mythos, especially the Judeo-Christian idea, devalues and distracts us from true liberation. I believe that we are never going to get rid of war as long as we have this continued belief in an afterlife. Surest way to stop war will be in suspending this myth. That, and people starting to treat children in a healthy way, instead of subjecting them to violence, which is an acquired behavior later in life. These are my ultimate ideal goals for now.

The beginning of history and the experience of time has been like an imaginary arrow shot into an imaginary future.

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3-space and time. In fact, in the summer of 1988, neopsychedelic love goddess Alison Wonderland shall come so completely In Her Glory that perfection will be manifested throughout all material and incorporeal realities forever both backwards and forwards in time. Yes. It's true! CLIT is going to lick all your problems in a couple of years anyway. But why not stay one step ahead of the millennial throngs?

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5: Your most personally valued possession which is smaller than you are.

6: Your resume.

7: Something of your own choosing. (Must be legal!)

It is the fourth day of the William Burroughs Conference at the Naropa Institute in Boulder, Colorado. The sun is out, the humidity is zero percent and it's another postcard-perfect afternoon. Sixty people are sitting in the main room of the Kappa Sigma fraternity house, a Tudor-style building usually full of engineers and lacrosse players attending the University of Colorado. This month it is full of poets and dancers attending Naropa's summer session.

Eric Mottram, a jovial elf who was the first professor in England to hold a chair in American literature, has lectured on Burroughs from the academic viewpoint. Anne Waldman, poet and longtime friend of Burroughs, has discussed his "cut-up method" of writing. Allen

Ginsberg and Gregory Corso have given a freewheeling seminar on his life and times.

Digression on "freewheeling"; Corso stalked around the room, classical music blaring from the Walkman headphone hooked around his neck. Ginsberg finally managed to get him into his seat behind the speaker's table. Ginsberg would begin a reminiscence about New

Inscrutable as an aztec mummy in a brown 1940's suit and porkpie hat, Burroughs sits off to one side of the speakers' table.

York or Paris; Corso would escalate the stakes by claiming obscure individuals offered improbable sums to have him perform eccentric sex acts. Ginsberg would appeal to Burroughs as the authority, and Burroughs would dryly remark that he didn't remember it being that way "a—tall."

None of the stories ever wound up being resolved into a single version; some stories never survived their first breath. Corso later admitted, while shopping the dairy section of Alfalfa's Market, that he had made up most of his stories to try to get a rise out of Ginsberg.

Now it is Ted Morgan's turn to talk about Burroughs from a biographer's point of view. Inscrutable as an Aztec mummy in a brown 1940's suit and porkpie hat, Bur-

William Burroughs - Cat Lover

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Books Of The Dead: An Interview

HIGH FRONTIERS: What do you think is the direction of mind technologies in terms of drugs and surgical implants, external technologies and techniques?

WILLIAM BURROUGHS: There is no limit to control of thought, feeling and apparent sensory perceptions. Professor Delgado stopped a charging bull. He had an electrode implanted in the bull's brain, just pressed a little button and the bull stopped. They can do the same thing with people. They can elicit rage, fear, joy, sexual excitement, just pushing buttons.

Could some of these techniques be used positively, to help humanity get to a higher level of functioning and self-government, self-control?

Humanity is a meaningless abstraction. As Korzybski always says, "Who is doing what, where and when." Are you talking about Columbians in an earthquake, Ethiopians in a famine, Americans in a country club, ethnic minorities in a ghetto? The punctuationalist theory of evolution seems to point to the fact that changes occur in small isolated groups and the tendency is towards standardization. In any case, take a species, probably only a very small fraction would be involved in evolutionary alterations. Maybe about one in a million and that's, biologically speaking, very good odds.

Do you think AIDS was created in a laboratory as a group-specific disease? And, did you predict it in Cities of the Red Night, and also in Ah Pook is Here?

(Sighs) I don't know. It's an old idea which I read in some science fiction book over 20 years ago. People were suddenly dying of colds and measles and things and they didn't know what they were dealing with. Then they finally found the common denominator was that the immune system had been knocked out. That's 20 years ago. Now as to whether it was created in the laboratory, Dr. John Seale of London says, "I do not doubt for a

... the separation of male and female into separate beings with divergent and in some cases contradictory interests was a mistake.

moment that they have released the lethal virus outside the Iron Curtain to systematically wipe out the whole free world." This is a well known London doctor who was invited to take part in an AIDS conference in New York. He said that the AIDS virus was developed from the feesna virus which occurs naturally in sheep and is always fatal. Then all of a sudden there is an outbreak of AIDS, a lethal virus that is identical to the feesna virus except that it has one more gene. Any government looking for a biological weapon of war would definitely look at the feesna virus. As to any evidence that the Russians are doing this, well, it isn't in this article.

Continuing in the biology frame, you referred to women as a biological mistake many years ago. How do you feel about that now?

I meant that the separation of male and female into separate beings with divergent and in some cases contradictory interests was a mistake.

What do you think about the re-emergence of the Goddess-oriented cosmologies right now?

Oh yes... I... incidentally, had a very nice correspondence with Lynn Andrews. We get along very well, at least by mail. In a way, I feel that either way is sort of

emphasizing the dichotomy instead of trying to solve it and make some sort of synthesis. Of course, with Lynn Andrews, that is my particular sphere of interest... the whole matter of shamanism, magic, the magical universe, etc. So we have a great deal in common.

Do you think the human future promises a liberation from human control systems? Do you think we can actually get free of that?

The trouble with this question is the "we." (laughs) I mean... when you're talking terrific variation. I believe that it would certainly be a very, very few individuals and small groups that would be able to liberate themselves. As for direct intervention from outside, there is an actual quite interesting instance of that in the xoatl salamanders of Mexico. Normally, salamanders start in the water, when they have gills. Then, when they come up onto the land, they develop air breathing lungs. When they go back to the water, they never get the gills back. You see, evolution is one way. Any evolutionary step which involves a biological alteration is irreversible. That's the law, though no one knows why. Well, this one salamander never came out of the water and that's the zoatl salamander. So some scientists gave this salamander injections of some kind of hormone whereupon the salamander shed its gills and climbed up onto the promised land. Whether people could be transformed by a single injection is another question.

I think that certain biologic mutations would definitely be necessary in order to inhabit space. We know already that if you don't use it, you lose it. I mean, a skeleton doesn't have much function in space. In fact, it's an encumbrance where weight is an essential factor. And we know that the calcium tends to go. If people were in space for a year, they might lose all their teeth, be subject to spontaneous fractures, and over a period of

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roughs sits off to one side of the speaker's table. Morgan has finally stopped talking about Somerset Maugham and has started on an anecdote about the late Joan Burroughs.

He says it's rumored that Joan said she'd come back as a cat. He says he's noticed that when Burroughs sees a cat, he takes its head in his hands and looks deep into its eyes. He speculates that Burroughs is looking for a trace of his wife there.

Morgan looks over his shoulder at Burroughs for confirmation. Burroughs purses his lips briefly but makes no comment.

It seems somewhat blasphemous to suggest that Old Bull Lee has a sentimental side. You know, the guy that wrote *Naked Lunch*. The guy whose books are full of "addicts of drugs not yet synthesized, black marketeers of World War III." You should know that when Burroughs and Norman Mailer debated on the state of the American soul at Naropa in the summer of 1984, Mailer came off as the pansy and Burroughs as the interstellar tough guy.

You can feel comfortable calling Ginsberg, Allen; Corso, Gregory. You can exchange small talk with them. Most people shrink from addressing Burroughs

directly. The small, unblinking eyes in that impassive face forbid approach. If he were to purse his lips at you, you'd shrivel up and blow away.

The subject of Joan Burroughs came up again towards the end of the week when Ginsberg read from Burroughs' new preface to *Queer*. *Queer* was written over 20 years ago, shortly after *Junky*, but never found a publisher. Burroughs has prepared a new edition, which should be coming out soon.

In the preface, Burroughs says he has come to believe that his writing has been an attempt to exorcise his wife's ghost. He thinks there is a strong possibility that if she hadn't been killed, he would have never written a word.

Ginsberg adds that this is the first time, to his knowledge, that Burroughs has ever discussed his wife's death. (Burroughs shot Joan in what has been called a "William Tell stunt" when they were living in Mexico.)

Burroughs doesn't follow up on Ginsberg's lead. The issue of whether Joan is now occupying some calico cat remains unresolved. He does talk about interspecies contact at length, though: *contact*, not *communication*. "There's a basic difference between communication and contact. Communication is designed to avoid contact, to

maintain the distance across which communication can take place. Contact involves identification with the creature you contact, and this can be very painful. Communication can be forced. Contact cannot. You cannot force anyone to feel."

He also reveals that he believes human beings to be stuck at an incomplete stage of biological development, sort of newts that haven't shed our gills and climbed onto land. Burroughs believes the next stage is to move out into space.

But the cats seem to be the key. At the conference's end, when Burroughs gives a reading from his works in progress, one of them is a book called *The Cat Inside*. And although some of the selections are diatribes against dogs in the classic Burroughs style ("smug, self-righteous animals... a dog is the only animal that will fuck your leg"), other sections are weirdly domestic: Burroughs in the supermarket, comparing cat food with an old lady shopper; or Burroughs' cat, "Calico Joan" entrusting her kittens to his care.

It's true, though Burroughs doesn't like to admit it. He's a nice old man. Who likes cats.

Mary Mazocco




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cont. from bottom of previous page
time wouldn't have any skeleton at all. The end result would be something like a jellyfish.

That would be considered unattractive from the earth standpoint.

Well, you couldn't phone home.

I've been much influenced by the Egyptian and Tibetan Book(s) of the Dead, but I think they're both antiquated... and what I'm essentially writing are books of the dead.

Da you still think that language is a virus from outer space? If sa, haw daes it fit into the biological scheme?

All you can say is that it acts like a virus. A virus repeats copies of itself. So does a word. A word is alive by it's nature and function.

We're always talking about the difference between humans and other animals. Well, no other animal is right or left handed. Now that, to me, is one of the really striking differences, to have two brain hemispheres—a dominant verbal hemisphere—and a non-dominant hemisphere which is spacial, intuitive, etc. So there you have a split. Possibly a fusing of those two hemispheres, or at least a functioning smoothly together would be a tremendous forward step. Most mental illness can be traced to this discrepancy between the hemispheres.

What influence daes DMT and ayahuasca have on your work?

Well, it's just input. DMT I don't like. I find most synthetic drugs unpleasant. Ayahuasca, I've only had those very few experiences. But it was very interesting input. *Did you have it in terms of a shamanic experience?*

Minimally. I mean the medicine man is just the one man who makes the ayahuasca in the town. He had his own formula. But the ceremonial aspects were minimal.

How about saund connected to both DMT and ayahuasca. They're said to have a saund component.

I didn't notice any audio component with Ayahuasca at all. It's a feeling of silence more than sound.

Many shamans use drums ar Ayahuasca songs.

In this group that I went to in Tecalpa, there were both men and women just sitting around. They all drank their portion after the medicine man sang a little song over it. After that, there was complete silence. Nobody talked.

No one was supposed to talk. There were no drums, just complete silence. Everyone was just enjoying whatever visions they were having.

There's one thing I'd like to clear up. I am not a hunter. I don't hunt. I'm pro-gun. I own a gun. I'd never kill a deer. Squirrels are just like cats. I couldn't kill a cat. I'm a big cat lover.

I have never doubted the existence of God or the possibility of an afterlife. But it isn't something you get just by believing in something. It's something that you have to work and fight for like everything else in this life or another, and not many people make it.

I've been much influenced by the Egyptian Book of the Dead and the Tibetan Book of the Dead, but I think they're both antiquated at the present time and what I'm writing essentially are books of the dead.

Are you working on something right now?

Yes. I've got a novel that's almost finished. It's called *The Western Lands*. You have to go through the lands of the pilgrims, the souls have to go through the land of the dead, to reach the Western Lands, and very few make it. It's the most dangerous of all worlds.

Well, we'll look forward ta that.

... the souls have to go through the land of the dead, to reach the Western Lands, and very few make it. It's the most dangerous of all worlds.

Haw would you like ta be thaught of, say, 50 years fram naw? Is there same sart of capsule...

One of the greatest compliments I ever got was from Beckett. He said, grudgingly, "He's a writer."

This interview was conducted by Faustan Bray of Sound Photosynthesis. (Far a catalog of tapes write: 533 Charles Lane, Mill Valley, CA. 94941.) Some of the questions were suggested by R.U. Sirius and Terence McKenna.



Lucumi Magic: an interview with Luisah Teish

Lucumi is a syncretic new world religion blending elements of Native American, European Spiritualism and African (primarily Yoruba) traditions. Lucumi is the form it takes in Cuba — comparable to Macumba in Brazil or Voodoo in Haiti.

*Luisah Teish, Lucumi Priestess and author of *Jambalaya*, was interviewed by Carol O'Connell.*

LUISAH TEISH: All over the world, in the evolution of human consciousness, there is a re-emergence of the eminence of the feminine principle. For the last two thousand years or so, almost everywhere, we've been suffering under the rise and (I'm happy to say) now the fall of the dominant patriarchal culture. In the case of Africa, what we have to understand is that among the various people we have had matrilineality — that is children belonging to the mother, and matrifocality, where the structure of the society has centered on the importance of the mother. We have always had positions of importance for women within these traditions. Then you get a situation where, through contact with other cultures, namely with Moslem culture, and with Christian culture, the African was given a sense of shame around this business of the importance of the Mother. I can remember being in an anthropology class in college where we were discussing what constitutes a primitive or civilized society. What are the marks of a civilized society? Well, the people use tobacco and sugar. We now know that tobacco and sugar are to be left alone. We also know that society cannot exist without paying some real attention to the feminine principle. Within the Lucumi tradition, there are positions of authority that are not determined by gender. It is determined by age...how long you have been a priest. So, if a male priest who's running things is ten years old and a female walks in who's 15 years old, she's his elder. And he has to respond to what she has to say. The typical male fears of the female, like the fear of menstrual blood, is based on something real, in that menstrual blood is powerful. And it is frightening to somebody who doesn't menstruate to see that, because everything in their world, if it bleeds, could die. Yet the woman doesn't. So patriarchy has responded to the mystery of woman with fear. I am pushing the African goddesses for several reasons. First of all, if you examine our folklore, you see that our goddesses are very strong characters. Those characters were not made up in the abstract. They were based on the temperament of the forces of nature and of women who existed at a time before the influx of patriarchy.

I am emphasizing the female in my tradition, among the people in my tradition, in an attempt to stop cancer. In trying to acculturate, we start to adopt ways that are not healthy. I want us to stop being ashamed of the fact that we have strong goddesses - to stop trying to deny matrilineality and matrifocality, and take it another step further and be critical of our own culture, and then to take that which no longer works out of it and revitalize it so that it continues to be a thriving religion. One of the problems that we always have is hindsight, foresight and presentsight. Most people sitting in presentsight tend to think that whatever they're doing right now is all that there is every going to be. But when we study history, we take a look at the nature of what has come into being, and what changes it has gone through to get there. One thing that African religion has demonstrated is its survival. In spite of the stranglehold of slavery and oppression, it survives because it always adapts to the time. When we came over here and our traditional religion was illegal, we adapted by appearing to be Catholic. We kept it alive. It changed slightly. But we kept the essence because it remained relevant and functional for the time. What I am saying now is that we are in another time where we have to do something else in order to survive. And that something else is to emphasize the feminine. Because the negative side of the



patriarchal attitude is man against nature. Man exploiting the forest. Man polluting the water. Man dirtying the air. Man poisoning the food. This is not a matristic attitude. All people have to come out of that one.

We've got enough technology now so we are not slaves to nature. Let's take what is good from the masculine, take what is good from the feminine, and start to weave a culture that supports life on earth. From inside, there's an organic compulsion within me to do this. Oshun pushes me to do this. There's no glamour in this. If left to my own devices, I'd be collecting an Oscar right now. I'd be a movie star or something. But there's an organic compulsion in me to fight the forces I see working against the planet and her people. When I lay down to rest, what's happening in my head is, "Look after the women, look after the children, consider what's happening to the soil." There is no rest from that. It's important for a lot of people to know — they see me speaking boldly, or see me being clear about this or that or the other thing; they should know that there are nights when I'm so confused I don't know what's going on. All I can do is meditate and ask for guidance. And when I ask for guidance, the answer that always comes is "Go and confront that." There are times when I'm scared to death, but one of the things that this tradition teaches is the cultivation of courage, standing up in the face of fear. I do that in order to be able to look in the mirror and call myself a priestess of Oshun. Throughout the book (*Jambalaya*), I'm speaking primarily to women, because women need to be made aware of their power. We've got a bunch of sleeping giants running around

here. But the book is not written in a way that is offensive to men. And a lot of men have come up to me and said, "I know you wrote this book for women, but it's been very helpful to me too." There's no one ritual in there that a man cannot perform. And every man needs to know that notion that he is some kind of unfeeling, brutal rock is something that was fabricated in Hollywood, based on an image that got really popular during slavery, during wartime. Nobody can live at war every day without being looney. So man needs to get in touch with the Mother within. That will solve a lot of the problems.

We have two problems in the Black community right now, among Black youth. We have teenage girls being pregnant and on welfare, literally being brides of the State. And we have young Black men committing suicide in incredible numbers. Now if you talk to Black people, most of us say suicide really ain't our thing. We're not into killing ourselves. There are two things going on here. Number one, we are about the business of restructuring the family that was torn apart by slavery. In Africa, we had an extended family. At one point we had a situation where everybody was the mother of every child and everybody was the father of every child. In fact, at one point in human history certain people didn't even have a word for father because the man was not associated with the business of creation.

I fully believe that we have got to restructure society, again, so that extended families exist and children belong to a number of mothers and a number of fathers. We have to figure out a way to do polyfidelity within the

All over the world, in the evolution of human consciousness, there is a re- emergence of the immanence of the feminine principle.

family. We have to figure out a way to do co-parenting. The young women who are having the children have only two alternatives. To not have them, which taken to the extreme could lead to extinction, or to become members of an extended family, so the children who are born can be raised in a healthy environment.

The young men have to take it upon themselves to change the society and change the definition of man. As long as manhood is defined by how many cars you have, how much money you got in your pocket, how many clothes you can buy, who you can beat and how many women you can get pregnant, there's going to be suicides left and right. That has never been a true definition of manhood. So we've got a lot of ghosts to kill and lot of life to save. At this point, in this situation, there's no room for mutual oppression.

People have to combat a mentality that allows us to see each other as something other than human. Maybe White people think Black people ain't human. You start looking at tribalism, and you find that this tribe doesn't think that tribe is human. People in this hemisphere think people in that hemisphere aren't human. That cannot be anymore. We live in too close proximity, our technology has made that ridiculous. Now you can get anywhere in the world in a day. And now you can destroy any part of the world in a day. So that we're like children who have created dangerous toys that our minds cannot match. While we're sitting here haggling over our little pieces of bullshit... "Who's got the money?"... "Who shot J.R.?", that kind of shit — you've got a madman in there who can press one button and make it all obsolete... race, class, sex ... all of that shit will meltdown in three minutes if he pushes the wrong button. We cannot tolerate that mentality anymore. So I am pushing for all people — man or woman, Black or White, no matter where you are or where you come from, to start creating a matristic nurturing society.

I honestly don't understand what life is about outside of taking care of she who sustains you...the planet, and taking care of each other. What else is there? I don't know.

High Frontiers: Can you direct the reader to any practices illuminated in Jambalaya that help open them up to the Mother, help them work the Mother into their lives?

LT: Yes, there's two things there in the book that I consider most important. One of the things that I hope came through clearly in the book is that I consider making contact with one's ancestors of primary importance.

Read the book. Do the rituals that are in there. They are safe. They are sound. No harm can come to you from doing them. But get your ancestor shrine constructed. Make your connection with your ancestors and then do what they tell you to do. I'm just here to get you started. Once you make connections with them, that's the most important interaction. For every person to have a means of spiritual independence, you have to have connections with the intelligences in the land of the ancestors and work out your problems with them. And if you dig deep enough, you ain't going to do nothing but run into yourself. Because reincarnation is real. You're going to run into yourself. You're going to run into the same principles that have ruled human life since the beginning.

Understanding that there is no contradiction between the spiritual and the political is what Chapter 8 is all about. That's another lie. That's another something constructed by some people who are trying to run things. I am defining political as how you live your principles out on a day to day level. I can sit here and talk anti-racism all day long. If I treat you like a dog when you walk through the door simply because your skin is white, then I ain't shit. It's that plain and simple. That's politics, how you relate to other people and the resources that mother nature has given to you. The spiritual is how you relate to everything that is.

Be willing to consider that the notions you have been fed, that've been constructed in your head, need to be tested. Does it hold up? As Mother Catherine, the spiritualist in New Orleans used to say, "Don't listen to what Peter and Paul and all them people have to say. Go to a tree and get some pure sap and let the tree tell you what reality is." We've got a serious problem because we've constructed these things we call law. We think we made law. We think we did. We did some things to try to keep some order, but the truth of it is that we are born into a universe full of natural law. That's what we have to pay attention to or things get all thrown off. You're always going to get women who are going to violate the defined norm and you're always going to get men who don't fit into the norm. Instead of making the norm rigid, and trying to make people fit into the norm, we need to be carefully re-examining, and let the norm be an open-ended and evolving thing.

I can understand how it happened. Man was devastated by the miracle of a human being coming out of women's bodies. You can understand why, among early peoples, God was considered a great mother. Because it's incredible, the work that comes with it. The ability to feed a child, the incredible patience, the whole idea of fertility, all that is wonderful. To then put a clamp on her and say that's all she must do is really insane because you're wasting human resources there. Similarly, to say that a man cannot nurture is to deny a great part of him. We just need to stop this battle and join hands and say to nature, "Show us who we are. Let us evolve into something that is more whole." But wherever there's power, there's fear. So courage — a real kind of courage, not the knock-down, drag-out, who's-behind-you-that-you-can-kick kind of courage, but the kind of courage where you really face the issues that are in front of you and look for solutions to them. That's what we need.

HF: One of the things that was interesting about Marie LaVeaultle was her curious combination of magic with compassion. Because she brought the psychedelic gumbo. And that's real amazing to me. First of all, I'm interested to know what's in the gumbo...

LT: Yeah, right. You and me both.

HF: And beyond that, what was her sense of doing an act of compassion for these people and doing it with that particular element of spirituality, which involves the use of magical substances?

LT: The way I see Mademoiselle, she was a woman who was doing the best she could to deal with the terror of

her times, with the resources at her disposal. Perhaps in a traditional culture, or in a more ideal setting, which I hope we will evolve into, when the time comes for a person to pass from the body, we will have midwives and attendants who can nurse them through that process just as somebody nursed us through birth. Perhaps she looks so unusual to us because we're accustomed to being pushed into one-dimensional roles. But imagine for a minute how many different people you would be if you were allowed to be all the people you could. Imagine also what you would become if you were in a position where survival demanded that you developed every person that you could possibly be. We live so much in specialization that we think, "Well the midwife is somebody who leads the person into life and the minister takes the person out." What about when both those roles are played by one person. She lived during extraordinary times. And from what I can gather and what I can feel of her she was highly versatile, highly adaptable, quick-witted, and beautiful. And she did what needed to be done at every turn. So much information is coming out now about the herbs and the medicines and the poisons of the African diaspora. I wonder myself what was in the gumbo. I've never heard any of the stories about any of the people that she worked with being seen again after they were dead. But reading the recent zombie material that has come out makes me think about those possibilities.

You have to keep in mind that in the African mentality a person has more power when they are on the other side of the veil, as an ancestor. So a good deed done for somebody on their way out is remembered. On the other side, among old Black people in the South, we knew when one of our old people was going to pass. Not because of how sick they were or anything, but we noticed a tendency to attend a lot of funerals. My grandmother used to go through the newspaper and she'd find out who was going to be buried when, and she would go to the funeral. I know another woman in St. Louis who used to do that. It's as if they are studying death. Paying homage to where they're about to go. It's like reading the catalogs to several colleges you're thinking about applying to. It's an attempt to approach it as much as possible in an earth-centered way. But there's so much about her. Honestly, she could be studied for a long time and you could still come up with amazing speculations on that woman.

HF: She sounds like she was a real source of inspiration for you.

LT: Absolutely.

HF: And you're talking about her circumstances being extreme, I can't help but think that you face that same issue, because clearly from everything else you've described, you are addressing a real awareness of a planetary crisis. So the actress, the otherwise-would-be movie star, has to play all her roles.

LT: That's right. It's a kind of pressure. Because if all I was applying for was an Oscar and I didn't get it, it wouldn't be catastrophic. But I feel sometimes that I need to study more, I need to experience more, I need to understand more...because this role, if blown, means life or death.

At times, I feel overwhelmed. We all do, no matter what it is we're doing. But I feel fairly confident, because I'm not the only one saying it. I'm the only one saying it in this language, maybe. But daily, people are being drafted by The Goddess. Daily, revelations are coming. I think that overall, nature herself wants us to survive. And so she touches us and changes us in that direction. Ultimately, I believe that we are going to wake up and still the hand that threatens to blow up the planet. Ultimately, I do have a vision. I don't know which incarnation I'm going to live it in. But I do have a vision of people being able to relate to each other as human beings. I have to keep that vision or I wouldn't make it.

I'm glad I live now. It's like living
in Heaven and Hell simultaneously.
It's the cloud of total unknowing.

The Cracks Between Worlds

a talk with Joan Halifax



Joan Halifax is the Director of the Ojai Institute in Ojai, California. She has worked with her former husband, Stan Grof, on the uses of LSD in psychotherapy. She is currently interested in integrating shamanism and Buddhism.

JOAN HALIFAX: I became involved in clinical work with hallucinogens in Western society, working primarily with people who were dying of cancer. In this situation, it was very clear to me that, in the West, there are no rites of passage, no initiatic experiences which allow people to go through the experience of dying and being reborn, in a meaningful way. And I realized that these rehearsals for death that are a part of most cultures were not a part of our own cultural experience. Therefore, the LSD work was, in my interpretation, a contemporary rite of passage which seemed very helpful, in most instances, for people who were facing immediate death.

My review is definitely mixed about hallucinogens in Western culture. Shamans have been using hallucinogens for tens of thousands of years to examine the human mind. They've worked with the chemistry and biochemistry of hallucinogens in extraordinarily sophisticated and subtle ways. I think that it's pure hubris to think that, in a couple of decades, a Westerner could come to know anything, other than a superficial, mechanical interpretation of working with hallucinogens.

I think the disaster of Western culture around hallucinogens is the disaster of pride and ignorance. And you come here to do an interview with me, as someone who you consider to potentially be an advocate, and I wouldn't call myself an advocate of anything particularly, other than nature.

I'm familiar with a substance that's rather new. It's synthesized. An acquaintance worked with this for eight years in order to get the basic logos, the signature of that substance, and how one works with it effectively. And this person can teach, in one night, through the sharing

of the experience of the substance with another, what took him eight years to learn.

The alkaloids in peyote are synergistic, highly subtle, highly variable, depending on your own biochemistry. In taking peyote, frequently there's sexual abstinence, abstinence from salt, frequently there's not even taking very much water... there's physical purification beforehand. So you're prepared, and your own biochemical signature is set at that moment to receive the peyote in optimal circumstances. Then, of course, many of the hallucinogens create a very telepathic situation. A situation where the ego boundaries are dissolved and lateral memory is engaged. That is this transpersonal experience of clairvoyance, clairaudience, a psychological link-up. When this happens, you're completely vulnerable to the content of another person's experiences. So if you're with a strong medicineperson, they're taking you, in essence, on their trip. You've passed into the archetypal realm, the mythical realm where thousands have passed before you, the tracks of the ancient ones into the trail of the ancestors where the spirits of the other world have created a logos; and where that logos is like a mudra, a seal on your experience. And you pass through by virtue of a shaman's skills; you're taken to that domain.

HIGH FRONTIERS: But it doesn't require that the shaman do that.

It does.

The spirit of peyote is there.

It is, and I think that many Westerners have tasted it. But they're influenced, to a degree, by the literature.

I can only say that the quality and depth of an experience mediated by a friendly, compassionate and expert shaman is frequently greater than one just hacking through the forest by oneself. Mescalito can certainly manifest, as can the little mushroom people that arise when you take mushrooms. But when you're working with somebody where the logos is set, you get there fast, clear and directly. And when you're trying to find your way — it's like re-inventing the wheel. It's like Icarus putting feathers on his arms with wax. Sure, we want to reach the sun. Sure we want to fly like birds. But when we get too close to the sun, the wax will melt. After a while, we'll develop a technology that can take us high.

Hallucinogens have been used to help people dissolve the boundaries between nature/culture and culture and the spirit world. And the spirit world, in my interpretation, is actually within us, not outside of us. To me, this is the reality of a microphone and a recording machine, and even of our voices talking. It's a reality that as soon as you hear it, it's gone. It's already changed. It's already dead. So these are all levels of illusion. I don't want to attribute too much weight to these illusions except that illusions can and do bring many people suffering. So hallucinogens help us to understand the relative aspects, the illusory aspects of this so-called reality that we seem to be speaking from right now. They provide a point of contrast.

What we're attempting to do in this work which we could call neo-shamanism is use as much as we can of Western technology, anthropology, psychology and ecology in a very skillful manner, informed by the traditions of the past, including the tradition ofentheogenic shamanism as a means of facilitating unobstructed awareness. That is, the recognition of the relativity of the visionary world and our illusionary world. The goal is being able to be in relative consciousness and unobstructed awareness simultaneously. I don't want to deny the beauty, richness and danger of the world we're living in now. It's the source of the life of our bodies and our minds, our emotional experience. By the same token, deep shamanism gets to an experience of the core of the matter of psyche, which is non-relative, absolute, an awareness without extremes.

Don Jose Machulet, a Huichol shaman who has been a close friend for 15 years, is a wonderful example of that. He's like the Fool in the Tarot deck. He has unobstructed awareness. He has an incredible capacity for adaptation. He's able to go to Europe or anywhere (he's over 100 years old), and relate to anyone because he's been in so many different actualities and realities besides this one, that it's just another dream state. Since he sees people suffering in these various dream states, he wants to do what he can to help relieve their suffering. That psychedelic awareness is interesting. That psychedelic perspective is of relevance to us.

A person that is ill in Western thought would say that this is caused by a germ. The shamanic aspect of that would be that he has let down his guardian spirit and there is an intrusion...

And the psychosomatic explanation would be that through your own mental construct you've become vulnerable to an outside influence. You see, I think all these interpretations are just interpretations. Nothing more, nothing less.

Hallucinogens, like atomic energy, are fast acting. They're rapid. This means that a lot more is being activated in a shorter amount of time. It's like atomic energy as opposed to a fire in a fireplace. Both involve a fissioning of energy, but let's face it, the temporal dimension and the intensity within that time frame is accelerated. In both the case of the fissioning of the atom and the fissioning of the psyche with hallucinogens, you're playing with a hot fire. You're also entering into sacred territory when you go into the psyche, the deepest and most sacred of territories.

The latest adjunct to psychotherapy is this substance MDMA, which seems a very benevolent substance.

It's not a hallucinogen. It's an empathogen. It has almost no hallucinogenic properties. It's relatively benign. It makes you feel good. It gives you a certain amount of insight, intuition. It's pleasant. It's also hard on your kidneys and your adrenals. It's hard on your body.

I guess there are aspects which one has to balance if...

Look, when you get to be my age, and when you've trashed your body as much as I've trashed mine... I wish I'd done at least five years less damage to my body. The body simply cannot handle too much poison. And a lot of the substances you take in the psychedelic world are difficult for the body to metabolize in a healthy way. Don't fool yourself. If I hadn't done so much self-exploration, I wouldn't be talking like this. But you're talking to an old war-horse. I've been through the battlefield. I'm on the other side. I'm glad. I don't personally feel it's necessary, in my life, to take hallucinogens any more. I've done it. It's been fascinating. I'm really glad I did it. It's been hard on my body, hard on my psychic and social life. Plus, as a woman... not too many women have done what I've done.

Do you have any thoughts about that?

Hah! I know why they haven't. They were having babies and careers. I didn't have children, but I had a full-blown career.

I'll tell you. There's a lot of other ages I would have liked to have lived in, but I'm glad I live now. It's like living in heaven and hell simultaneously and not really knowing. It's the cloud of total unknowing. Not knowing what tomorrow will bring has resulted in beginners' mind or insanity. Most people choose confusion, choose insanity. I feel that the path of the shaman and the path of the Buddhist is such that beginners' minds can potentially arise.

That's it. It's the cracks between the worlds where Spiderwoman lives and allows her spirit to pass.

Interview by Lord Nose

I had a vision of where I'm going to end up. It's going to be me as a very, very white gentleman with a white beard, white hair and a white jumpsuit in a white dusty universe, all by himself, laughing.

John Lilly - Frontrunner



Famous psychedelic researcher, dolphin researcher, inventor of the isolation tank, author of *The Scientist* and *The Dyadic Cyclone*, on interspecies communication, E.S.P., and how consciousness works.

The following is excerpted from a talk given by John Lilly at the Institute for the Study of Consciousness in Berkeley, California. It was selected for publication in High Frontiers through the auspices of Faustiu Bray and Brian Wallace.

I've gotten a new degree recently — two new degrees, actually — one of them is SU, student of the unexpected. That's followed by FR, which is front runner. Those of you who are skiers or racers know that's the man who is out in front and breaks the new trail after the first snow. So I try not to get bound down by my own previous writings, my own previous experience, or that of anybody else. Sometimes I find myself pretty much alone. I had a vision of where I'm going to end up. It's going to be me as a very, very white gentleman with a white beard, white hair and a white jumpsuit in a white dusty universe, all by himself, laughing. That's the temporary end of any frontrunner. He's so busy trying to be out front that he ends up quite alone.

Lilly's Law is that all models are simulations of reality. Including this one. So that one of the simulations that I like best is that of the cosmic computer. Have you seen the movie *Tron*? Can you tell me who the master control program is? It's the current consensus reality. Which doesn't believe in users. And who are the users?

They're the spiritual beings outside the computer... outside the program. So *Tron* was sent in to destroy the master control program. In other words, to destroy the consensus reality. But who constructed the computer in the first place? I love that movie because it had all the paradoxes in it that I'm constantly dealing with.

I conceive of myself as a programmable entity that has a material existence. And I'm held here by a consensus reality belief system that I call the "vibes of the tribe." My only existence is their belief that I do exist. Whereas, in reality, I am a spiritual being which I call a holosoul or a holospirit. The holospirit has a form, the anthropocentric or anthropomorphic form, but in order for it to be seen by the vibes of the tribe it must be filled with matter. I discovered this in the isolation tank. I would take about 350 milligrams of ketamine, climb into the isolation tank. The material of my body would diffuse out of the holosoul. The holosoul would be left there sitting in the isolation tank and in direct contact with that whom I call God. Now, who is this God? Or what is this God? And where is this God? Well, my god is omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, eternal, and finally, benevolent.

I asked for a benevolent god, and he said, "Okay. I'll go along with that one." I said, "No Mohammadan god, no Christian god, no Jewish god, none of this stuff that I've been deluged with since childhood. None of this stuff that starts wars on this planet. I want to be a healer, and I want a benevolent god." So he said, "Okay." And then he said, "What kind of a universe do you want? Among all the alternate realities, your hyperspace and Bell's theorem and all that, what would you choose to return to?" So I said, "All right. I can lay it out pretty carefully now. I want to be in a universe in which there is ESP power among individuals, using Bell's theorem, instantaneous communication between any two individuals, any two intelligent entities anywhere in the universe." He said, "Okay, and how will you choose to make this communication between two individuals?" And I said, "Totally on the initiative of the two. And nobody can bug their communication." And that agreement was made. So in this universe, though you may not know it yet, you can have private ESP channels between any two parties anywhere in the universe. This means ETs as well as humans and dolphins and whales and so forth.

At the National Institute for Mental Health, I devised the isolation tank. I made so many discoveries that I didn't dare tell the psychiatric group about it at all because they would've said I was psychotic. I found the isolation tank was a hole in the universe. I gradually began to see through to another reality. It scared me. I didn't know about alternate realities at that time, but I was experiencing them right and left without any LSD.

Various LSD pushers at N.I.M.H. were insisting that I take it but I didn't until ten years later. I finally took it, in the isolation tank in St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands with three dolphins there. I took LSD for the first time, in the tank, with three dolphins under it in a sea pool. I was scared shitless. It was 300 micrograms injected intramuscularly. As I climbed over the wall into the saltwater, a memorandum from N.I.M.H. appeared before me — "Never take LSD alone." That's when I learned that fear can propel you in a rocketship to far out places. That first trip was a propulsion into domains and realities that I couldn't even recount when I came back. But I knew that I had expanded way beyond anything I had ever experienced before and as I was squeezed back into the human frame, I cried.

Not long after that, I took a trip with a whale, north of the island of Tortolla in the British West Indies, and realized the vast presence of the whale. She was 60 feet long. We were in a boat 40 feet long. She came up, turned one eye and looked at me and there was a huge bolt of knowledge. Incredible! I'm sure if I hadn't been on LSD I'd have felt it, but I *really* felt it. It just shook my whole being. Suddenly, I realized that whales were very

great, high, spiritual beings. I didn't dare say this to anybody. There wasn't anybody around to say it to.

I don't feel that any more cetaceans are needed to convince us of who they are. Those which are in captivity now, if we're open to them, will educate us. As long as we open our ESP channels to them they will unequivocally educate those who are able to receive. I'm warning you; if you go anywhere near them, you'll get zapped.

Gaia is sort of the hologram or the holosoul of the planet. And if there's a disturbance in one part of that, then there's an equal and opposite kind of balance that goes on. So if you move part of the holosoul of the planet, then another part moves. If there are a lot of murders in Beirut, then you've got a lot of whales stranded somewhere else. It sort of has to balance out spiritually. There's a very complex set of equations which I don't follow, but if you pay very close attention to the news you can get a feel for this balance. So you don't want to release any news prematurely. I've learned to leak any news that I have discreetly and make no headlines whatsoever. Otherwise there may be a cost in terms of whale lives or human lives or an earthquake or Mt. St. Helens blowing up. Of course, when Mt. St. Helens releases pumice, that's releasing a lot of very old information and we all breathe in and take in three billion years old stuff.

I talked to God again and I said "Wouldn't it be fun to have a universe in which every atom was intelligent." He said, "Okay." I think I've found out since that atoms have always been intelligent?" As Heinz Von Forrester says, "A non-trivial machine can not be determined by man." You know all the inputs and all the outputs and all the history of a non-trivial machine, you still cannot predict what it's going to do next... what its central state is. Given the input, you can not predict the output of the central state. I talked to Heinz about this a few days ago and said, "It seems to me, Heinz, that even a hydrogen atom has that property." He said, "Yes. Of course. A hydrogen atom is a non-trivial machine and therefore it is intelligent." So we have intelligence as far down as the atomic nuclei and so on. If you then make an assemblage of atoms of any sort, you get a new kind of intelligence characteristic of that assembly, until finally you work up to the assembly known as humans. So we have one particular kind of intelligence. Dolphins have another particular kind. Giant squid has another particular kind. Mt. St. Helen's has another particular kind.

We're building solid state energies of very high intelligence in the form of computers and computer networks. Each one of us is partly a solid state entity. We're able to stand up under gravity because we have bones. Bones are solid state entities. They are linked into the solid state intelligence of our whole bodies. Think of each atom in yourself as being intelligent, and the totality of your material being as being intelligent, as well as your brain capacity. You'll see you have much more power than you thought you had.

What is the largest solid state entity that is closest to us? Mother Earth. Gaia. If you remember that there are ten to the 45th bits of information per cubic centimeter of solid matter, then you'll see that there's enough memory under you at all times to record whatever any organism that's passed that way has done over the past few million years. So there's no problem with the programming of evolution. Gaia is programming us. We are the consequence of a benign entity, Mother Earth, plus the echo.

Faustin Bray and Brian Wallace of Sound Photosynthesis. They produce many tapes which are of interest to High Frontiers readers. They may be written to at: 533 Charles Lane, Mill Valley, CA, 94941.



Antonietta L. Lilly 11/25/28 - 1/28/86

When Toni told us about her body's advanced bone cancer condition, she spoke with a light voice, recounting a recent conversation with Richard Ram Dass Alpert during which he relayed what his guru told him: "Death has been given a bad rap, you know. It's like taking off a shoe that's too tight."

In the following one-and-a-half months, Toni distributed that wisdom and pieces of a future script to her friends and relations, saying that she believed in models and we needed one for leaving the body with dignity. She was ready and willing.

She called up a cosmic overlay of an Albanian/Sicilian Dantes' *Inferno*, *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* in the operatic crossing-over of a Mediterranean tribal matriarch, mother goddess, sister Diana—huntress with hounds, and Calypso Nymph Mischievous playing in the waves of uncertainty.

We A.L.L. have a part, we are assured, in the archetypal musical chairs, with metamorphosis and alchemical transmutation keeping the natural rhythm. She transferred that sense of... "it's all happening and you are here, there, and everywhere." The continuation of the life dance is primary and one may flamboyantly hostess the eternal party on decks festooned with multi-colored streamers fluttering in gentle breezes. Permissionaries of courtly love, questers for the Philosophers Stone, sway hand in hand with California style-setters, transcending limits at the spring-fed watering hole of conceptualists from all facets of front-line thinking/being.

Faustin Bray

PSYCHEDELIC SCENARIOS

by Bruce Eisner and Peter Stafford

MDMA has recently come to prominence as the most widely used member of a new generation of psychoactive compounds with more specific—in this case, “heart-opening”—effects than the classic psychedelics. In our last communique, we mentioned that the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) intended to place MDMA in Schedule I of the Comprehensive Drug Control Act. According to the provisions of that legislation, this means that the compound has been determined to be 1) “without medical usefulness,” and 2) “with a high potential for abuse.” Events have proceeded along a strange and twisted road since then. Here is an update of the on-going MDMA chronicle.

Much to the surprise of DEA officials, several medical and psychological professionals challenged the proposed placement. This challenge resulted in three hearings taking place, in Los Angeles, Kansas City, Missouri, and Washington, D.C.. These occurred over a year's time, during which the media took a sudden interest in MDMA. Articles appeared in *Newsweek*, *Time*, *Psychology Today* and *Life* magazines, among a host of others, and Phil Donahue devoted a tv show to the subject. There were mentions on virtually all network news shows. Fans of *Doonesbury* enjoyed two and a half weeks of Uncle Duke's hosting of a MDMA and exotic drug conference at his Baby Doc College in the Carribean. Given this conflagration of attention, the DEA began to issue statements indicating a strong desire to see MDMA banned.

This was soon accomplished using a law which had been passed in October, 1984, with the intention of stopping the spread of designer drugs such as fentanyl. (A variant, alpha-methyl fentanyl, has become notorious for causing almost instantly something very much like the debilitating brain disease of Parkinson's syndrome.) Ten days before the first of the three hearings set up to determine the proper placement of MDMA, or if it should be scheduled at all, acting DEA Administrator John Lawn declared that MDMA would be placed on Schedule I on an “emergency basis” for one year starting July 1, 1985.

The hearing produced 10 volumes of testimony from witnesses for the DEA and from professionals who wished the drug to be placed on a lower and less restrictive schedule so that further research would not be curtailed.

Some highlights of this testimony included two staff members of the Haight-Ashbury Free Medical Clinic facing each other from both sides of the issue, and agreeing that they had seen very little abuse of MDMA in their practice. Depositions included statements by Shulgin and Nichols, who had coauthored the first report of the effects of MDMA on humans, distinguishing this compound from MDA—a compound that had been outlawed earlier and which the DEA argued was sufficiently similar that MDMA should be banned as well.

Dr. Ron Siegel, who was billed to be the star witness for the DEA, failed to appear at the Los Angeles hearings but did later testify on his study of MDMA “street users” at the Washington, D.C. meeting. Siegel said he did not find compulsive use patterns developing for MDMA, and thought that it did not have a high potential for abuse.

Some of Siegel's testimony was more objectionable to those sympathetic to the further study of MDMA. For instance, he declared MDMA a hallucinogen similar to compounds such as mescaline. He also told his favorite MDMA horror story, about a psychologist who took it once and ended up “directing traffic” on a busy Chicago boulevard.

In the same courtroom, one of the government's witnesses, John Docherty, former chief of the Psychosocial Treatment Branch of NIMH, told the court that he supported further MDMA research, and that “MDMA is at the confluence of two great trends in psychiatry: psychotherapy and pharmacology.” He said that the reason for this was because it had been shown to enhance rapport between therapists and their clients. Studies have demonstrated that rapport is one of the few factors reliably significant in psychiatry.

The DEA's Administrative Law Judge Francis Young in a two-part, 90-page decision recommended that the compound be placed in Schedule Three. “The administrative law judge finds and concludes,” he wrote, “that, prior to its being proscribed effective July 1, 1985, MDMA did have a ‘currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States.’ It is not presently being used in treatment because it has been proscribed.” The judge itemized 100 “findings” from the testimony that had been received. On the question of abuse, he declared that “The evidence of record does not establish that, in the context of S) 812, MDMA has a ‘high potential’ for abuse.”

At the initial hearing in Washington, D.C., Young had ruled that MDMA could be placed on a lower schedule than

Schedule I without having widely-accepted medical usefulness. His decision was particularly noteworthy in that he linked medical usefulness to actual medical practice, rather than FDA approval.

Ignoring the recommendation (which the DEA had already received) of its own administrative law judge, John Lawn then extended the MDMA ban for another 6 months, the legal limit for emergency scheduling, or until the rule-making process was concluded.

The DEA issued several objections to the judge's decision. Richard Cotton, attorney for those who had questioned the DEA's proposed scheduling, issued a sharp rejoinder. “The DEA staff has reacted with knee-jerk hostility to what are serious and real medical research issues. Moreover, their position that the evidence in this record warrants a finding that MDMA has a ‘high’ potential for abuse is—frankly—preposterous. The evidence doesn't exist... Nonetheless, the DEA staff is determined to place MDMA in Schedule I, come hell or high water, and it isn't going to let the facts, law, or even common courtesy to the Administrative Law Judge stand in its way...”

As 1987 begins, some decision must soon be forthcoming or has already been made. The DEA seems determined to ban MDMA, but there is still recourse for the litigants in the U.S. Court of Appeals. Thus, the final chapter has not yet been written.

Now the government aims at banning states of consciousness rather than controlled substances.

While these legal struggles have gone on, the first book about MDMA, *Through The Gateway of the Heart*, a collection of first-hand reports about 44 individual and 10 group experiences, has been issued (Four Trees Publication, Box 31220, San Francisco CA 94131, \$15.50). Also the Haight-Ashbury Free Medical Clinic sponsored the first gathering on the subject—“MDMA: A Multidisciplinary Conference”—which included most of the principles involved. (Rick Seymour's monograph *MDMA*—\$17 from Haight-Ashbury Publications, 409 Clayton St., San Francisco 94117—was distributed to all participants.)

Perhaps the highlight of the conference was Dr. Rick Ingrasi's passionate appeal to continue his therapeutic work with MDMA. Chemists Shulgin and Nichols were there to present pharmacological aspects. James Bakalar, Ph.D., George Greer, MD, and Jack Downing, MD, three of the professionals who were litigants in the MDMA scheduling matter, gave accounts of their work. Ron Siegel was there to show that he wasn't such a bad guy after all, along with Frank Sapienza—a DEA spokesperson. A panel on the sexual aspects of MDMA—surprisingly, the least lively affair at this event—brought this meeting to a well-attended conclusion.

When the announcement of the MDMA ban was made on May 31, 1985, one of the major reasons given for evoking the DEA's emergency ban was a study done at the University of Chicago. Charles Shuster, who has since been promoted to head of the National Institute for Drug Abuse (NIDA), was one of the authors. In this report, the investigators disclosed that MDA in extremely large amounts had apparently caused brain damage in rats. They conceded that there might be some objection to applying this study to people. In the paper itself, appearing in *Science* magazine, they write, “Given differences in species, dose, frequency and route of administration, as well as differences in the way in which rats and humans metabolize amphetamine, it would be premature to extrapolate our finds to humans.” Despite this cautionary attitude, the news that “MDMA causes brain damage” was in newspapers and on tv everywhere by morning.

To emphasize the differences again, 1) MDA was used rather than MDMA, 2) it was given to rats rather than humans, 3) it was given in massive doses, 4) it was given every 12 hours for four days, and 5) it was given intravenously (injected in the vein) rather than taken orally, the way that people use MDMA. This study was replicated later, however, using the same techniques with MDMA.

Other studies have since been done at Intox Laboratories in Arkansas in which rats and dogs were given a variety of oral doses, including very high ones, for 28 days. Every test required by the FDA for approval of testing with humans found no reason for serious concern.

Perhaps the most vitriolic issue in the recent election campaigns involved a bipartisan attack on drug use. This has since been enlarged to what is called the "War on Drugs." Although "drugs" have been taking a beating over the past few years, epitomized by Nancy Reagan's concentration on this issue, the cocaine overdose deaths of two top sports figures in the space of a week unleashed a virtual hysteria against drug use. Psychedelics and other consciousness-altering drugs unfortunately have been swept up as part of this storm.

Some events in the months that followed included a 13-year-old girl turning her parents in for marijuana and coke, who was soon to be followed by a bevy of others. There were calls for the death penalty for drug dealers, and for the use of the military in sealing off national borders. Raids in Bolivia on coca fields involved the U.S. military for the first time in overseas drug eradication programs. Ronald Reagan and his wife Nancy made a unique joint appearance on television to deliver their message, "Just say 'No' to drugs."

The final vote in the House on a 1.7 billion Omnibus Drug Bill was 318 to 16, indicated the popularity which this offensive aroused.

Included in the package and of particular interest to our readers was a "Designer Drug Bill." The term "Designer Drug" here means "a substance other than a controlled substance that has a chemical structure substantially similar to that of a controlled substance in Schedule 1 or 2 or that was specifically designed to produce an effect substantially similar to that of a controlled substance in Schedules 1 or 2."

Now the government aims at banning states of consciousness rather than just a list of "controlled substances." There are many implications from this overt attempt to control consciousness, and it may mean the end of all legitimate research in the area of psychedelic compounds in the United States. An attempt by George Greer to add an amendment to the bill, allowing for research, was labeled by some senators the "Timothy Leary Clause" and struck from the final version by Congress (although it did pass the House).

PSYCHEDELIC FLASHES

Contrary to the popular notion that people aren't taking LSD anymore are reports of large-scale production of high quality LSD. Unfortunately, the reports came along with pictures of the "material" confiscated by the DEA—2.7 million doses picked up in San Francisco, 3 million in Berkeley. In the first case, the packaging involved the embossed letters "YES" and LSD make in a laboratory at S.F. General Hospital, said to be of very high quality.

Recent papers in scientific journals have announced the discovery of new, interesting lysergic acid amides—including one that is two to three times as powerful as LSD. Also disclosed has been a whole new class of psychedelic compounds related to the brain neurotransmitter adrenochrome. All you readers out there of the *Journal of Medicinal Chemistry* have caught the paper on the effects of variations of aromatic oxygen substituents of N-methyl-N-isopropyltryptamine. One of these compounds is four times as powerful as DMT and active orally. Drug chemistry marches on!

Recent books we have seen include *Drug Control in a Free Society* (Oxford University Press), by James Bakalar and Lester Grinspoon. This is the fourth volume in this field by these Harvard professors and focuses on the hysterics that typically accompany drug history. There was little mention of current drug patterns.

When the above book talked about Prohibition, it included the observation that over a third of the people in jail during this period of American history were incarcerated for beer or rum running. We see similarities between this statistic and DEA John Lawn's recent statement that 37% of all current federal prisoners are there on drug charges.

In a recent special issue of *The Village Voice*, called "Drugs are US," Andrew Weil told about his recent harrassment after an attack in the Senate by Paula Hawkins, Republican of Florida. Hawkins objected to his coauthored book *Chocolate to Morphine*, proclaiming "I would recommend that all curricula be redirected to teach our children to say no to drugs. No more teaching about responsible use." (Ms. Hawkins was soundly defeated in the recent election. Her opponent criticized her for

exploiting the drug issue. ed.) Weil mentions that he had been asked just previously to be on tv and radio talkshows. He has turned these offers down, suggesting instead that those requesting read his books.

Here are some of his other comments: "I think there's a politically motivated drug panic which is more severe than anything I've seen in the 20 years I've been involved in this issue. Some of it is because the elections are approaching. Some of it is to divert people's attention from issues that are more serious. Some of it is generated by the news media, which have learned that fearmongering sells programs and papers... I think that the hysterical mood that I've seen, this kind of legislative-feeding frenzy, and the fact that I don't see people standing up and being counted on the other side, makes me feel that this is really not the time to debate the Reaganites in public. I just don't want to draw that kind of heat..."

The most expensive coverage ever of this mind-changing field has just appeared—*The Encyclopedia of Psychoactive Drugs*, issued by Chelsea House Publishers. This comes in 25 volumes (\$373.75 per set, \$15.95 per volume).

Acid Dreams (Grove Press) by Marty Lee and Bruce Schlain is a fascinating attempt to give a comprehensive history of LSD in the United States, centering on use by 1) the CIA and the military, and 2) the counterculture. They show connections between these two seemingly diverse groups of LSD users, and include a lot of previously unrecorded materials. (Watch for an in-depth interview with Marty Lee in issue #4, ed.)

Certainly the psychedelic art event of this decade occurred over the summer of 1986 at the Santa Monica home of Dr. Oscar Janiger. Janiger, who had the opportunity to give LSD to such notables as Cary Grant, Andre Previn, James Cohn and Adelle Davis, displayed 60 sets of various artists' paintings of the same object, done both before and during LSD sessions. This was the first time this work had been shown in a quarter century, and drew great interest from art classes and a wide range of those in tv and other media. Some of those who had done the original art were present, and because many of the artists have become famous since this work was done, Janiger now is in possession of a valuable collection.

LOGOS
BUSINESS CARDS
STATIONARY
BROCHURES
FLYERS
ANNUAL REPORTS
PROMOTIONALS
KEY CHAINS
STICKERS/LABELS
SILKSCREENING
SIGNS
T-SHIRTS
CAPS
BANNERS
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Felsenstein continued from pg. 17

The development of the personal computer was a convivial technology development. I'll make that bald statement. The industrial superstructure decided against personal computers. They were presented with the options a couple of times. They could've done it and they didn't. Meetings were held and they said, "I can't imagine why anyone would want to have a personal computer." End of project. So it was up to people who did it for the love of it, did it for the growth that occurs when you engage in that kind of athletic activity.

Imagine trying to make a computer yourself. It was a hell of a challenge. A far bigger challenge than anyone realized. Thousands of people rose to that challenge. They were motivated to rise to the challenge because they wanted to gain some control over a technology that they knew was otherwise in control of them.

This kind of involvement with technology which encourages mental development and involvement is convivial as opposed to industrial. That's a word that Illich uses. And if you talk about introducing it to primitive societies, you have to keep in mind an important point, that these people are every bit as intelligent as we are. It's a primitive culture. That does not mean that the people involved don't have every mental tool that we've got.

I think the danger involved is if you take the approach of saying, "This is an inviolate box. You will use it our way. You will become civilized." That's the missionary approach. Missionaries go out and try to prepare the ignorant primitive natives for the onslaught of civilization and they think they're doing good. They thereby become the onslaught of civilization.

Another approach is that it's quite possible to build non-verbal computers. They can be used to manipulate symbols, and symbols are not words. Some of the products which we want to design and license out are for non-verbal interaction with computers. Using tactile input, video input, auditory input and output. I think that's what Kay has in mind. The kind of computer he's talking about, you will be able to express relationships using the position of your hand. Gestures, in effect. The auditory language we would use would be a low-level language which the computer would speak. We would learn to speak it. Humans learn to speak languages very easily.

And we learn kinaesthetically. I'd guess there can be a very easy, natural personal computer interface developed that can be learned kinaesthetically.

Right.

I think the natural unit of society amounts to the village. I think that's built into us. I look forward to a society in which village-like social structures are natural. I'm not talking about physically returning to neolithic organization. There's too many people for that and we've got too much experience now. We know how to do things. We know how to put things together. You can't unlearn things, uninvent things. You can't reinvent them. That's a major procedural point I'm trying to make. But in terms of the goal, we have to reinvent village society to fit within an urban social context.

Some people say that there's a post-industrial society coming. I don't think they mean that there will be no more industry. There will be industry but it'll be vastly differently organized from that which we know. So much of that organization, which we know and hate today, has stemmed from considerations of practicality. So if you change what's practical, you have no more excuse for not changing what's real, how it's implemented. Of course, this doesn't happen automatically. But it is happening. There are definite indications this way. I look forward to a situation in which one is considered to be a fully developed person if one can exercise both the artistic elements of one's being and the productive elements of one's being in a fashion in which there's no way to distinguish between the two.

MDMA: SAFE AS ICE CREAM?

Jeremy Tarcher Interviewed

Jeremy Tarcher is publisher of Tarcher Books, a company which specializes in new age books. Among these are the handful of psychedelic oriented books which were selected for mass-market distribution in the early eighties; including Dr. Albert Hofmann's LSD My Problem Child and Tim Leary's autobiography Flashbacks. We met Jeremy at his luxuriant Beverly Hills home where we interviewed him. His wife, Shari Lewis, of television fame, could be heard practicing voice in another room. Jeremy impressed us as a truly gentle person.

Jeremy Tarcher: We have now a discussion about this extraordinary substance (MDMA) and you will hear about it on the news, not day in and day out, but certainly weekly or monthly for many months to come. And it seems to me that the media is taking, at first at any rate, an objective position - certainly far more objective than the DEA is taking. Whether someone emerges as a spokesperson for the potential uses of brain chemicals, I don't know. And let me not put only psychoactive drugs in that classification but also drugs that will increase aggression as a psychological tool, drugs that will diminish aggression, drugs that will help memory. There are lots and lots of things coming and a more sophisticated person might say they are already upon us. We are now going to open this up for discussion within our society. I think that is very good. But the government's initial success in scheduling this, and making anybody who testifies on behalf of MDMA testifying for what they have made criminal, is certainly a form of intimidation.

Nobody has shown there is any emergency of any kind. The government has yet to put forward a single meaningful statistic. Now, it may be that I haven't read all the information and the DEA has a better case than they have made. But I doubt it because I have heard them make their case and it seems objectively pretty weak.

Of the 50 or 60 people I know who have taken MDMA, everyone agrees that its effects diminish over time on a fairly heavily declining basis. It seems to me an abuse-proof drug to the degree that you can take more and more of it and you are going to get less and less out of it. Now you can kill yourself with this, but in some ways it is easier to abuse ice cream than MDMA. Now, you know Schedule I says that the substance has no medical use and a high abuse potential. I would claim that ice cream has no medical use and a higher abusability factor than MDMA.

The problem with the things that happened in the 70s with LSD, excesses of enthusiasm, the proselytizing for universal use... we don't need that. And if those who are concerned about drugs don't learn from the past, we will find ourselves repeating the problems of the people who were the leaders of those movements 15 years ago.

We have to do better this time than we did last time. What happened last time was perhaps inevitable, given the fact that it was the first experience in modern history where drugs played the part that they did in our culture, and the counterculture was stunningly successful in changing this country. I think all of us who live in America today are the inheritors of a certain kind of invisible wealth that was bestowed upon us by the heroes of that time. But 1985 is not 1965. We have a different political scene. We have had 20 years of change in this country. And we are going to see significant social benefits from the use of drugs of this kind. We are going to have to take a different approach to proselytizing for them, other than manning the barricades or saying, "Just put a little of this in the soup at the Kremlin and the world is going to be hunky dory."



We need to campaign for the expansion of human consciousness rather than for drugs.

Altered states is still the subject that we would all do better to focus on. The drugs are only a very convenient and pretty mechanistically certain means of altering consciousness. It is, in fact, not the drugs but the altered consciousness that is the important issue. If the three of us were able, by chanting an appropriate group of words or by going through a certain exercise, to alter our consciousness to the degree that an LSD tab can, I dare say we wouldn't bother with the LSD, which is just what we use in order to get from here to there.

Analogous to hardware.

That's right, and getting to there is the important thing, because what we find there that is attractive to us, is a broadened perspective, a deeper understanding of ourselves and other people, humor, creativity, many things which we all really enjoy and have fun with. So we need to campaign for the expansion of human consciousness rather than for drugs. Now, drugs are a means of doing that... a semi-reliable means.

If there were a broadly available means other than drugs to get the benefit of altered consciousness, I would say, give up any thought of further drug usage. It is like if you want to be in New York and you're in California, you grab a jet, or a train, or whatever means of transportation you prefer, and you are there. If you could shut your eyes and be there that would be the most convenient and the cheapest and best way.

The thing about drugs is that, for instance, when you smoke DMT, you get to a place you can't get to by any

other means. It is totally other. Drugs, meditations, shamanic drumming are all different accesses, but there is no absolute correlation between a non-drug state and a drug induced state. To a great extent, we are talking about really different experiences. That is what Terence McKenna talks about with the tryptamines. The idea that there is actually a specific, separate carrier or messenger in there. Now eventually it might be possible to make chemical changes in your body that would release the tryptamines. F.M.Esfandiary was talking about surgical implants, that these are going to be the wave of the future. That and electrical stimulation. So there are many possibilities.

I am by no means a sufficient enough connoisseur of different states of drug consciousness to contradict you or agree with you. I do know that for thousands of years, without drugs, sages in all religions, ordinary peoples throughout the world, have reached states of mystical consciousness. And in modern times, perhaps tens of millions of people have had those experiences through the use of certain psychoactive substances. I am not sure that drugs like ketamine, for example, produce states of consciousness that are anything other than wild trips, or that we are near to understanding what those states are about, or whether they are about anything at all!

Sideshow.

Sideshow.

Some people take drugs and get apparently nothing out of it. NOTHING! I HAVE NO IDEA HOW THAT HAPPENS TO THEM!

A lot of it is the context in which it is brought into the culture. In the 60s, people were expecting to have spiritual experiences, or whatnot, with LSD. Therefore, they did. In the late 70s, many kids had never heard anything at all indicating that LSD might be a positive way of finding out about your psychology or contacting something spiritual. So they take it like they would coke or anything else. And they just have giggles. They have never been introduced to any other context in which to experience it.

We human beings really have not mastered normal consciousness yet. I am not sure we are fully prepared for extended consciousness. We are at the point where a semi-rational discussion can be held about drugs and culture. I think we ought to take advantage of it and, also, be open to the legitimate fears of people who have never had the positive experiences that we have had, and have been overwhelmed by the negativity that the media has, by and large, shoved down on them, and who are frightened about what the drugs might hold in store for our society and for them as individuals. You have to respect that fear, recognize that it a reasonable thing for somebody to have, and deal with it not as if they are the enemy, but as if they are friends who need to be given some additional information, and shown by our behavior and by our reasonableness that drugs do not make us into steely-eyed revolutionaries willing to tear everything down in order to get our way.

On some occasions I have spoken with business associates and others about LSD. I have said, "If you think well of me afterwards, I would like you to think perhaps a little better about some of the drugs that I have talked about which have helped me to become the person I am, the person you supposedly like and think well of."

The high frontier is really a high consciousness frontier. Drugs are one way of crossing that border. There are others. To the degree that we can acknowledge that and promote those others, we make the road more attractive.

COMING OUT OF LEFT FIELD WITH GRACIE AND ZARKOV

Our resident designer heads, Gracie and Zarkov, continue their aleotonic journey through mythology, philosophy, epistemology, psychedelic drugs and irreverence.



When we last left our investment banker heroes in issue #2, they were about to hold forth on how to invent your own religion.

Gracie: We first ran into Goddess imagery when I was doing manifestation or possession states. Not possession in the sense of blacking out, but possession in the sense of being in contact with an entity who was expressed through dance or facial expression or unusual turns of phrase or changes in voice.

Zarkov: A couple of times these were actually extended raps that Gracie could give.

G: Right, but without losing my sense of personal ego. I was still Gracie, but at the same time I was Circe or Aphrodite or whoever.

High Frontiers: Which Goddess was it?

G: It varied. Aphrodite, Hecate, Athena... eventually we got back to a sort of Sumerian, but sort of generalized...

Z: Goddess of Sex, Goddess of Love, Goddess of Procreation, fertility, definitely agriculture, definitely war... so it sort of fits the Innana complex.

G: When asked, during a contact, they all tended to call themselves "The Goddess," and I am emphasizing the capital letters. That's their terminology.

HF: Does all this arise from psychedelic experience?

Z: We have not been able to make definite contact except in altered states. The interesting thing to us is that we didn't get The Goddess on the tryptamines (until our recent betacarboline experiments), although we know of a person who's had quite a bit of experience with psychedelic states who recently has gotten her own particular version of The Goddess on mushrooms.

Z: My first encounter with The Goddess was the first real contact experience I'd had. I've had contact with about a half dozen different entities since then on various occasions — but what makes this so impressive was that I wasn't a believer in these types of phenomena on a gut level. What I got on that particular contact was very specific advice on how to deal with people in my life. Basically, I was having personal difficulty with certain people who are close to me, when we were just beginning exploratory combinations of MDA and LSD. I fell into a trance, got into this contact, and The Goddess started a rap. It was a lengthy set of situation-specific pieces of advice on how to behave. Now, what was strange was that much of the voice I couldn't understand at the time. The characteristics of The Goddess singing were like fast tape-recorder music, like someone singing too fast to understand. Tonally, it was beautiful. It didn't sound like Minnie Mouse. At the end of the contact, I was symbolically given golden scrolls, and for about six months after the contact, when I ended up in a situation with the people I was troubled about, I would hear a brief burst of this singing, and sometimes I would see in my mind's eye the scroll — and what was strange was that now I understood the advice. Several people commented that all of a sudden I was much easier to get along with, I was paying more attention to their needs, or whatever. I thought, this is pretty strange. There's no way I could tell them why. They'd think I'd absolutely lost it.

Z: One of the other types of psychedelic experiences that we clearly try to distinguish from "contact" is where we will have strange trains of thought or borderline visions where the archetypes come out and play around, perhaps the great God Pan, Hera, Innana, Ishtar... but you've not got a clear case of an entity sitting down on the beanbag chair next to you and giving you a rap, but

all of a sudden you have an understanding, or a thought that wasn't in your head before... that you can identify with the archetypes.

G: Or facial changes which we see in each other. That's one of the other ways of using sex magic — you can, while fucking, look at each other and watch faces change. We've had the Pan entity show up.

HF: How'd you do it?

Z: If you want to go into a trance, usually the best way is MDA first, 100-150 mgs., then LSD about 150-200 mcgs about a half hour later. The other way is a moderate dose of LSD — moderate meaning 150-200 mcgs — enough to definitely be high, and then anywhere from 3 to 4 hours later, a fairly high dose of MDA, 120-200 mgs., and then play these sorts of games, e.g. sex magic, ritual, etc.

G: The mescaline/LSD mix — we used mescaline first followed by LSD — can provide tremendous insights into psychological states, into neurotic ways of thinking, and can help you blow those right out of the water. The mescaline/LSD mix is particularly interesting because it seems to bring some of your neurotic programs right up front where you can see them working. It brings it up on the screen and shows you just what that strange loop is, just what that incorrect thought is.

If you're always doing the same drugs at the same dose in the same setting repeatedly, you're probably not getting anywhere. And we've found that one of the best ways to make sure you keep making progress is to vary things. Vary the substances you use, vary the dosage, vary your set, vary your setting. If you always do it outdoors, do it inside in the dark for a change. If you always do it inside in the dark, go outside and do it.

Read. Between your trips pick a particular topic that you want to study — something you're going to work on, a particular historical period that interests you, a particular issue in art or music, and spend the whole week studying that. For example, say you want to explore body language and representation of the body. Read *The Nude in Art*, read *Seeing Through Clothes*, do some mirror meditation with your own body, do some yoga, do all those things the week before and then trip and do body-oriented things and talk about it. You get much more material than just saying "I want to have a body-oriented trip" and taking some drugs.

Z: We argue continually about the purpose of psychedelics. But I think our position right now is that it beats bowling. It's very interesting to do. It's a form of research. What can you say about substances that ask "How would you like to see travelogues of a planet 13 light years away?" and you go "Why not?" and you see visions of sea serpents that turn into beautiful naked women, and back into sea serpents. The voice then says, "You know, you should think about that, there's a message there for you," and you go "Well, okay." It beats

worrying about whether the Reagan tax package is going to pass.

G: You get a lot of insights into any area of study. Noetic anthropology is the term we use, which I think is borrowed from Terence (McKenna). Sometimes we try to figure out just how can you get into the heads of the people who were around in pre-dynastic Egypt? Or just what was going on in Minoan civilization? Trying to figure out what was going on back there, especially since much of that historical material is difficult to interpret because we're living in a post-patriarchal culture, is of interest.

Z: The edge of pre-history to history, as to what really happened...

G: ...is an area that interests us particularly because we think it speaks very specifically to the human dilemma of modern times. That is, "What do we as a species and individuals do now?" One of the most important things we think we do — and certainly we do it for each other — is to inspire optimism and a sense of purpose. I think there's a widespread feeling of despair, of not being able to do anything about the destiny of the human race. I think it's important more and more to psych ourselves up to think in a heroic sort of way about what action each individual can take. I think these kinds of studies — including the work on your own head, including the work on periods in history — are absolutely essential to understanding ourselves. And understanding yourself is the single most important step anyone can take in terms of maximizing the likelihood of the human race not only surviving, but moving on to a better kind of existence.


HF: Do you identify the patriarchal stage with scarcity consciousness?

G: That notion plugs into something we've been talking about recently which is based on John Pfeiffer, the paleoanthropologist, and his book on prehistoric cave art, *The Creative Explosion*. He talks about the transition from an early hunter-gatherer pre-historic period in which, for tens of thousands of years, during the early development of the human race, the species evolved under conditions so different from what we have now that it's very hard for us to imagine being those kinds of people. Living where game was so abundant, where gathering things to eat was so easy that there was an enormous population growth on the part of the human race, which has resulted in a fight against scarcity ever since.

Z: We're talking tens of thousands of years.

G: But I think that 8-10,000 years is what is normally considered the start of the patriarchal period. And I think that it was in response to that feeling of wanting to wrest control because you could no longer count on the goddess to pour out her abundance for you with very little effort. Perhaps after the move to space, we'll be able to enter a period of unlimited resources where we can get back to that kind of "normal" human psychology which we haven't seen for 10-15,000 years. And in that sense, I'd have to say... Yeah. We've got a goal.

HF: What is your impression of the sort of hardware/software argument about moving into space? The hardware as the sort of masculine Western roadtrip and the software is... well, some people carry the argument as far as to say that we can move there spiritually or psychically, perhaps even rather than physically.



G: The issue of hardware and software, like the issue of male and female, black and white, day and night, is the old dualistic bugaboo that has been plaguing most of humanity one way or another for a long time. And I think we've got to get past it. I think that we are both our hardware and our software. Right now our hardware dies, and that's a real limitation we're stuck with. When we figure out how to make the hardware immortal, that'll solve the hardware problem. On the software question — we don't know what happens to the software when the hardware dies. Does the software go somewhere else? We don't know where that somewhere else might be. Is there a way to separate the hardware from the software so it doesn't matter if the hardware dies?

Z: There's a lot more information "out there" than has physical reality, and it just so happens that there are things that occur physically like this glass. But there are a lot more things "out there" of all kinds and shapes which probably aren't made out of silicon dioxide like this glass, or carbon and water like we are.


What you see on psychedelics — you just don't know whether they exist or not. One of the strangest trips so far put me on this other planet subjectively for three days. Objectively for 4 hours. But on that planet the sun came up, I got warm, the sun went down, I got cold, I could swim, I could eat, I could make love to the inhabitants. I looked at my boots, the details were there — I mean, I was *there*. I've never had a vision like that before — it's always movies on the eyelids.

G: I would certainly be in agreement with Leary and Wilson and other people who emphasize life extension, that we should get the hardware to work as well as possible and as long as possible because right now it's the most powerful tool we have for manipulating what we perceive as reality. Somehow I have an intuition — although it's only an intuition and not something I would try to claim as true — that there's something very important about being embodied. That's a very real problem for us as conscious entities to solve. Why be embodied? And why is embodiment such a temporary, painful and sloppy sort of solution?

HF: Do you think that some people, on psychedelics, might be grinding their neuroses even deeper?

Z: Definitely. That's a real good point.

G: I think that's especially easy to do with LSD if you believe that it loosens your imprints and conditioning and allows you to re-imprint and recondition. If you re-imprint and recondition with the same stuff that you had when you began, you reinforce whatever neurotic programs you already have.



Why is embodiment such a temporary, painful and sloppy sort of solution?

HF: Do you think psychedelics should be used by a large number of people — that it's necessary in order to move in time and space and eliminate the neurosis in humans? How many people should use it? Antennae for the species?


Z: Number one, as thorough-going libertarians, we believe they shouldn't be regulated. Period. But personally, I do not recommend, particularly given most people's education and personalities, that large numbers of people should take psychedelics. On the other hand, I don't think there's an elite, an elite priesthood, no matter how it's defined. Being generally against authority, the last thing in the world I want is anybody getting control of who does and who does not use these drugs. That's worse than having them illegal. The use of these drugs should be an individual's independent and thoughtful choice.

We live encased in a lot of delusions. Many of these delusions could have foundations which date back to pre-history. One advantage psychedelics allow you, if you pursue them with any kind of care, is the ability to move outside the local delusions to try to see alternatives. For example, we may be able to put off a major war on this planet for a few more years, but 100% prevention forever of nuclear war, given the current thoughts and the current circumstances, is unlikely. Something has to change. Many people who are involved in space and computers, whether it be financing or technology, do psychedelics for inspiration. Some of the inspirations provide reasons for space migration — one could be escape, one could be shifting the world scarcity equation to make peace more probable.

More deeply than that, you can make significant repairs to your head, you can become a happier human being, you can become healthier, you can become less deluded, you can become more effective and make a stronger contribution in the real world using these drugs. Leary said that everyone who is on the leading edge in any of these things has come to terms with psychedelics in some fashion. That's certainly true...

Z: Our current science is the outcome of the Western heresy that individuals can understand the universe. We have culturally let science be taken over by a bunch of reductionistic technicians. The great scientists of the recent past — at the beginning of the century — would have very little to do with the reductionist philosophy.

G: It's only really in the last 25 years that new models, new mathematics, new ways of describing the universe in the abstract have developed that might do a



better job. Like catastrophe theory, fractal mathematics, Prigogine's theories of dissipative structures, etc.

Science, in the classical sense, is now very much in the position that the Church was in the 16th century — as "The Model" that would describe everything, the motion of the planets, how living systems work, how to be an ethical person, etc. We don't so much need a new model or a new paradigm as a whole bunch of new models and new paradigms, and to learn ways to apply those to the domains where they fit best.

Z: That's what we mean by science: hard Baconian facts. It should be pure empiricism. You give DMT to ten people. They've never had DMT before, and you tell them only that they might see something. If nine out of ten of them come back with descriptions of elves, and four of them use the word elves unprompted, we think you should investigate the phenomenon of elves seen on DMT. Twentieth century research into the mind is about as advanced as Lavoisier's chemistry in the eighteenth century.

G: Coming out of left field is the thought we'd probably like to leave you with. There's a lot of research in numerous fields. Intelligent people are working on all sorts of problems. No one knows where the next answers will come from. I think fewer come from a society that says you should limit what you think about to these dozen or so topics that are socially acceptable. You're more likely to get better solutions to more problems in an atmosphere that maximizes the freedom of individuals to choose whatever topics they're interested in, and to follow that interest as deeply and as thoroughly and as weirdly as they feel is necessary.

Z: I'll close with a quote from one of my favorite people, Socrates. He said, "The unexamined life is not worth living." What else is there to say?

And we've chosen to close with a passage from the paleoanthropologist John Pfeiffer's recent book *The Creative Explosion*:

"Think of the hundreds of thousands of useless things that are going on in the world somewhere right now. There seems to be no limit to what people will do, provided it is sufficiently off-beat and has never been done before. All the new games and experiments and assorted forms of dare-devilry, everything from double somersault ski-jumps, walking tightropes between skyscrapers, and setting the record for the most parachute jumps in a 24-hour period, to wrapping cliffs in cellophane, swallowing new drugs and combinations of drugs, playing Dungeons and Dragons, attempts at levitation, and on and on and on. Such activities represent the cutting edge of evolution, human-style. They are analogous to the random genetic mutations of organic evolution. The vast majority of mutations are harmful or useless, and so are the vast majority of off-beat activities. But someday as society changes at a mounting rate, one in a billion may pay off, and it's impossible to predict which one."

Note: the collected writings of Gracie and Zarkov, Notes from the Underground, will be published by High Frontiers Press in the Winter of 1986. Watch for it!



FRACTALS, CYBERNETICS, AND THE HUMAN FUTURE — Terence McKenna



through your field of vision, tumbling slowly. This kind of interaction with an invisible dimension of vast intelligence is coming to be. Now I think that it's always existed in a wet-ware form. This is what shamanism is. This is what all societies end up building. They build it out of mushrooms, morning glories and tobacco smoke — or silicon, copper, gold and plastic. Everybody ends up erecting a cybernetic network for transferring the information that they have culturally validated and seek to preserve. This information matrix is going to be on a massive scale. Right now nine million computers a month are being hooked into communications systems. Most of these are for the networking purposes of small management groups. This is the new global organism which is taking shape. It is this organism which will survive.

It's my conviction that the historical process creating these networks is mirroring intuitively larger cosmic processes. It is an actual intentionalization, or creation, of the Overmind. Not so much its creation, but its invocation into matter in order to save us.

This is a birth process. It is traumatic for the planet and for the people undergoing it. Birth is natural and necessary. It's important, I think, to have faith that it's going smoothly. We can now see the future in a way that, even 15 years ago, people couldn't. If we keep our ducks in a row the next 100 to 250 years can be seen fairly clearly. All we have to argue about is how fast to run the movie. In other words, starflight by 2010, or will it take until 2050? Will we have complete ability to transfer and integrate human consciousness into machines in shared states of group telepathy by the year 2000 or 2025?

Additionally, on the social and political front, what's happening is almost parallel to the situation in Europe when wars of religion finally dragged themselves out. People just got sick of it. They didn't have any great moral awakening. They just said "We don't care anymore whether you're a Huguenot or a Catholic or whatever. We've just had enough already." I think this kind of impatience is now in certain places and will grow. Capitalism is very impatient with mass-mediated, manipulated, so-called democratic societies. And capitalism wants to forge ahead, who knows how humanely. But the merchant princes do see the potential in the future. And many Western institutions see only the potential for despair in the future. To my mind, the future is tremendously compelling. And the things that are going to be done are truly astonishing. Today they are imaginable. But it is only persistence that will bring them to be. That's why it's very important to preserve through any dark age, whether it lasts months or years. It's the psychedelic notion that amazing creativity is resident in the individual human mind. Space is the human imagination calling us forward. That means that within twelve light hours of the sun, O'Neill-type habitats, which everybody now agrees are technically feasible, could be erected. Those structures can be built. These paradises can be erected, there can be a millennium, there is no question about it.

It's possible to envision the solar system as a kind of human swarm-world, with thousands of these colony worlds, each pursuing the social dynamics that they had evolved or were interested in exploring, all suspended in the same sphere of electronic communication and data transfer. Yet this is a conservative future. A future which does not rely on any new technical breakthroughs or discoveries of great new natural principles. Of course, one may be sure that there will be new discoveries, rich discoveries. So if we can lift the lethal beast off our backs we can go forward into a future that is endlessly bright.



This essay is the distillation of one lecture from Terence McKenna's week-long Esalen Seminar titled "Alchemy, Shamanism and the Millennium."

Fractal geometry is the mathematical study of self-similar forms. Through simple iterative operations, objects with an infinite regress of detail are created. Many natural forms such as snowflakes, coastlines, and the topography of riverbeds and mountains exhibit fractal qualities.

Cannot a fractal description be used to model historical events or psychedelic trips? Moreover, will the explosion of personal computers, connected by fractal networks, ultimately result in the actual construction of a "world soul?"

Is the light at the end of the tunnel not the flash of thermonuclear destruction, but rather the dawn of a new type of consciousness? Read on! Zarkov and Gracie

Consciousness is a process that has been gathering strength for a very long time. It appears that the tendency for systems to complicate and to multiply the connectedness within them is some kind of ontological characteristic that pervades not only organic but pre-organic existence, even pre-cellular existence.

When one looks at the history of the universe on a vast scale, what one sees is a great initial state of indeterminacy, an inchoate state of such high energy that everything is flying to pieces — there is no bonding energy that can overcome the kinetic energy of the system. Then, as time passes and temperatures fall, eventually nuclear chemistry is possible, electrons settle down in orbits around the nuclei of atoms. Then, at a still much later point in time, the temperature in the universe in certain areas has fallen and the stars have cooked out a much more complex species of atoms... carbon. Suddenly very complex structures can arise. And this tendency toward complexity describes the history of the entire universe and also describes: the history of the 20th century, your life, the past six months — all of the processes have a tendency to grow towards an endpoint of extreme complexity. The creation of extremely complex structures from simple similar operations is the essence of fractal progressions.

It's interesting that such self-similarity is both the property that one encounters in fractals and in nature. So what is this peculiar tension between individuality and the general case that is experienced directly with some hallucinogens? What one perceives under the influence of tryptamine hallucinogens is the fractile nature of the self.

In that extremely altered state, one touches that notion of the fractile nature of the self and brings it back to see it all around you.

What one perceives under the influence of tryptamine hallucinogens is the fractile nature of the self.

For instance, examine ourselves as social creatures, I am myself yet I am similar to all of you. I could be someone else — you or you or you — and likewise you could be anybody. Individuality is a uniquely felt thing, but few people would argue with the statement that someone looking down from a flying saucer would see us as interchangeable, the way we see ants as interchangeable. Yet from the point of view of the self at any level of the hierarchy, there is a unique perspective and a unique centering process which creates an individuality, a point of view which is sustained in time. But then, when one turns towards the temporal dimension, one discovers that time also has this fractal quality. One minute is rather like another, one day is rather like another, one year is rather like another. And yet each day, each moment, each year is different. So there is this strange tension between the self-similitude of temporal flow and also the differentiation in it. But what emerges slowly out of this is the perception that all of these flows, all of these fractals, all of these self-similar processes are imbedded in similar naturally fractal processes at higher and higher levels of expression, in space and in time.

The larger implication [of this fractal perspective] is that the whole history of humanity is moving toward an endpoint — an apocalypse, a momentous event which will cast everything that preceded it in some kind of new light, make everything new, and morally exonerate the historical horror that is necessary to reach that moment.

Technology in the form of cybernetics is becoming the excretion that is the truly hard-wired portion of the human unconscious in the same way that a coral reef is the excretion of the coral polyp.

Mind-machine interaction is going to become a major frontier for development and redefinition. When this happens, the excretions of technology, the keyboard, the video display — all of this will begin to disappear. It's not unreasonable to expect that eventually one will access cybernetic networks by thought. I take the hallucinogens as the ideal model for the computer system. For example, when one, in a psilocybin state, says "art deco" and millions of art deco objects start drifting

MAZATEC WOMAN

Maria Sabina

The Mazatec wise-woman Maria Sabina served Gordon Wasson the sacred mushroom, "the little children that spring forth," and there in the luminous darkness of the Oaxacan night, the two thousand year exile of Western civilization from the wondrous and mysterious forces that shaped its origin came to an end. The great vacuum was punctured. Neither our culture nor hers would ever be the same.

Now she is dead. The words which follow, which come largely from her own mouth, spoken by the mushroom in the night vigil, speak of her end and her beginning.

Maria Sabina died again. She had done so before. This was the final time. "I know the realm of death," she said, "Because I've been there."

She shed her leathery, wrinkled body as she might take off the beautiful embroidered nupike that she wore in the mushroom-velada. She stepped out of her cracked and calloused feet and walked along the path that she knew so well, this time to the end.
The path of the tracks of the palms of her hands
The path of the tracks of her feet
The path of the tracks of her heels
The path of the tracks of her knees
The path of sap
The path of dew
The path of her long life
The path of her well being
Where her Father stopped
Where her Mother stopped.

"The day that I die," she said, "what our customs dictate will be done. They will twist the neck of a rooster that should die next to my corpse. The spirit of the rooster will accompany my spirit. The rooster will crow four days after I have been buried; then my spirit will wake up and will go forever to the realm of death."

She did not depart alone. They say in the nursing home in Oaxaca that at the end she talked with friends and relatives long dead. Her children were there, of this world and the other;
her sprouting children
her budding children
her babies
her offshoots
her hummingbird children with vibrant wings.

The Principle Ones were there, just as they had been with her at the hour of her conception.

"Wisdom comes from birth," she said. "It comes together with one when one is being born, like the placenta. The mushrooms have revealed how I was in the days when I was in the womb of my mother: It's a vision in which I see myself turned into a fetus, an illuminated fetus. And I know that at the moment I was born, The Principle Ones were present."

She did not go forth unescorted.
She did not go forward unguided.
Because there came the Lord of the Door and the Dooryard
Because there came thirteen lord eagles
Because there came thirteen lord opossums

Because there came thirteen lord whirlwinds of colors
Thirteen sacred whirlwinds of colors
Because there came thirteen lord networks of lights
Thirteen sacred networks of lights
Because there came thirteen lordly ones with the vibrant wings
The sacred ones with the vibrant wings.

She did not go unprepared.
Because the little saint children had worked inside her body.
Because she had followed the rope of her life
The rope of her destiny
The rope of her personality.

She went forth skillfully.
Because she can swim in the immense
Because she can swim in all forms
A sacred swimmer, the lord swimmer
A woman of the great expanse of the flowing waters
A woman of the expanse of the divine sea.

She went forth with familiarity.
Because she is a woman of the networks of lights
Because she is a shooting star woman
A whirling woman of colors
A clockwork woman
A woman who brings lightnings forth
A well-prepared woman
Because she gathered up the primordial
Because she gathered up the sacred
Because she shepherded the immense beneath the water
Because she whistled and shouted and sang and danced in the darkness
Because she was a woman who fell into the world
Because she began in the depths of the water.
Because she began where the primordial sounds forth
Where the sacred sounds forth
Because she came from inside the stomach of her mother, Maria Concepcion
Who gave birth to her
Her virgin doll mother from beneath the sea.
Because she was born, because she slid out, because she fell out
Because she came forth sacred
Because she came forth important
From out of the darkness
From out of the night
When the plains and the hollows hardened.

"During my wake" she said, "My family will place jars of water next to my lifeless head... so that I'm not overcome by thirst while I journey to the realm of death. Inside my coffin they will put seven gourd seeds, greens, and some balls of the dead, all tied up together in a cloth bag. It will be the food that I will take so that hunger doesn't bother me on the way... They will dress me in a clean huipil and my best shawl. Between my hands will be placed a palm cross that has been blessed."

Now she has gone.
With humility. With eloquence.
There are clean flowers where she is going
There is pure water where she is going
Because there is no dust there
Because there is no garbage there
Because there is no resentment there
Because there is no rancor there
Because there is no argument there
Because there is no anger there
She has gone with clarity
She has gone with purity
She has gone with tenderness
She has gone with calmness
She has gone with well being
With freshness
Like breast-milk
Like sap
Like dew
She is known in heaven.

illustration by Karen Duthie



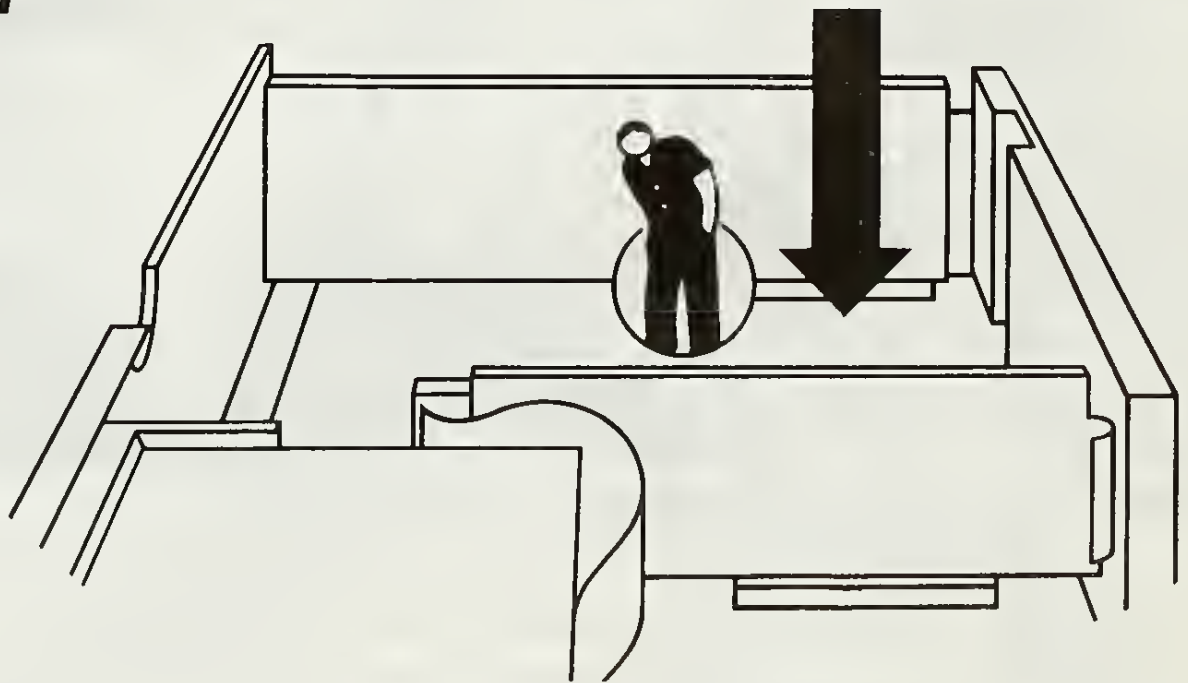
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