PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: TIMOTHY LEARY

a candid conversation with the controversial ex-harvard professor, prime partisan and prophet of LSD

On a sunny Saturday afternoon in 1968, beside the swimming pool of his rented summer villa in Cuernavaca, a 39-year-old American ate a handful of odd-looking mushrooms he'd bought from the witch doctor of a nearby village. Within minutes, he recalled later, he felt himself "being swept over by the edge of a sensory niagara into a maelstrom of transcendental visions and hallucinations. The next few hours could be described in many extravagant metaphors, but it was above all and without question the deepest religious experience of my life." The implications of that fateful first communion are as yet unmeasured; that they are both far-reaching and profound, however, is generally conceded—for the fungi were the legendary "sacred mushrooms" that have since become known, and feared by many, as one of the psychedelic (literally, mind-manifesting) chemicals that have created a national fad among the nation's young and a scandal in the press. The American was a Har-
vard psychotherapist named Timothy Leary, who has since found himself transmogrified from scientist and researcher into progenitor and high priest of a revolution ary movement spawned not by an idea but by a substance that's been called "the spiritual equivalent of the hydrogen bomb."

Few men, in their youth, could have seemed less likely to emerge as a religious leader, let alone as a rebel with a cause. At the age of 19, Leary distanced his Roman Catholic mother by abandoning Holy Cross two years before graduation ("The scholastic approach to religion didn't turn me on"), then attended his father, a retired Army career officer, by walking out of West Point after 18 months ("My interests were philosophic rather than militaristic"). Not until he transferred to the University of Alabama did he begin to settle down academically—to work for his B. A. in psychology. On graduation in 1942, he enlisted as an Army psychologist, served in a Pennsylvania hospital until the end of the War, then resumed his schooling and earned his Ph. D. at the University of California at Berkeley. Acquiring both eminence and enemies with his first major jobs—at director of Oakland's progressive Kaiser Foundation Hospital and as an assistant professor at UC's School of Medicine in San Francisco—Leary began to display the courage and sometimes rash iconoclasm that have since marked every phase of his checkered career. Contending that traditional psychiatric methods were hurting as many patients as they helped, he resigned in 1958 and signed up as a lecturer on clinical psychology at Harvard. There he began to evolve and enunciate the theory of social interplay and personal behavior as so many stylized games, since popularized by Dr. Eric Berne in his best-selling book "Games People Play," and to both preach and practice the effective but unconventional new psychiatric research technique of sending his students to study emotional problems such as alcoholism where they germinate—rather than in the textbook or the laboratory.

At the time, predictably enough, few of these novel notions went over very well with Leary's hidebound colleagues. But their rumbles of skepticism rose to a chorus of outrage when Leary returned to Harvard in 1960 from his pioneering voyage into inner space—beside the swimming pool in Cuernavaca—to begin experimenting on himself, his associates and hundreds of volunteer subjects with measured doses of psilocybin, the chemical derivative of the sacred mushrooms. Vowing "to dedicate the rest of my life as a psychologist to the systematic exploration of this new instrument," he and his rapidly multiplying followers began to turn on with the other psychedelics: morning glory seeds, nutmeg, marijuana, peyote, mescaline—and a colorless, odourless, tasteless but incredibly potent laboratory compound called LSD 25, first synthesized in 1938 by a Swiss biochemist seeking a pain killer for migraine headaches. A hundred times stronger than psilocybin, LSD sent its hallucinated users on multihued, multilevelled roller-coaster rides so spectacular that it soon became Leary's primary tool for research. And as word began to circulate about the fantastic, phantasmagorical "rips" taken by his students, it soon became a clandestine campus cult, and by 1962 had become an underground cult among the

"In 3000 people that I have personally observed taking LSD, we've had only four cases of prolonged psychoses—two or three weeks after the session. All of these had been in a mental hospital before."

"An enormous amount of energy from every fiber of your body is released under LSD—especially sexual energy. There is no question that LSD is the most powerful aphrodisiac ever discovered by man."

"I think that anyone who wants to have a psychedelic experience and is willing to prepare for it and to examine his own hang-ups and neurotic tendencies should be allowed to have a crack at it."
Reagan even dragged the issue into his successful campaign for the Republican gubernatorial nomination in California.

It was amid this mounting outcry against the drug that Playboy asked Dr. Leary to present his side of the psychedelic story—and to answer a few personal questions about his past, his future, and the scientific promise and its alleged peril. Conscientiously, he invited us to visit him in Millbrook, where we found him a few days later reciting Hindu morning prayers with a group of guests in the kitchen of the 61-room mansion. He greeted us warmly and led the way to a third-floor library. Instead of sitting down in one of the room’s well-born easy chairs, he crossed the room, stepped out of an open window onto a tin roof over a second-story bay window, and proceeded to stretch out on a double-width mattress a few feet from the edge. While we made ourselves comfortable at the other end of the mattress, he opened his shirt to the warm summer sun, propped his bare feet against the shingles, looked down at the mansion’s vast rolling meadow of a lawn, listened for a moment to the song of a chickadee in the branches of a tree nearby, and then turned, ready for our first question.

**PLAYBOY:** How many times have you used LSD, Dr. Leary?

**LEARY:** Up to this moment, I’ve had 311 psychedelic sessions.

**PLAYBOY:** What do you think it’s done for you—and to you?

**LEARY:** That’s difficult to answer easily. Let me say this: I was 39 when I had my first psychedelic experience. At that time, I was a middle-aged man involved in the middle-aged process of dying. My joy in life, my sensual openness, my creativity were all sliding downhill. Since that time, six years ago, my life has been renewed in almost every dimension. Most of my colleagues at the University of California and at Harvard, of course, feel that I’ve become an eccentric and a kook. I would estimate that fewer than 15 percent of my professional colleagues understand and support what I’m doing. The ones who do, as you might expect, tend to be among the younger psychologists. If you know a person’s age, you know what he’s going to think and feel about LSD. Psychedelic drugs are the medium of the young. As you move up the age scale—into the 30s, 40s and 50s—fewer and fewer people are open to the possibilities that these chemicals offer.

**PLAYBOY:** Why is that?

**LEARY:** To the person over 35 or 40, the word “drug” means one of two things: doctor-disease or dope fiend-crime. Nothing you can say to a person who has this neurological fix on the word “drug” is going to change his mind. He’s frozen like a Pavlovian dog to this conditioned reflex. To people under 25, on the other hand, the word “drug” refers to a wide range of mind benders running from alcohol, energizers and stupifiers to marijuana and the other psychedelic drugs. To middle-aged America, it may be synonymous with instant insanity, but to most Americans under 25, the psychedelic drug means ecstasy, sensual unfolding, religious experience, revelation, illumination, contact with nature.

There’s not a teenager or young person in the United States today who doesn’t know at least one person who has had a good experience with marijuana or LSD. The horizons of the current younger generation, in terms of expanded consciousness, are light-years beyond those of their parents. The breakthrough has occurred; there’s no going back. The psychedelic battle is won.

**PLAYBOY:** Why, then, have you called for a one-year “cease-fire” on the use of LSD and marijuana?

**LEARY:** Because there have never been two generations of human beings so far apart—living essentially in two different worlds, speaking two different languages—as the people under 25 and the older generation. Evolutionary misunderstanding causes bloodshed and imprisonment. To relieve this situation, I’ve asked the younger generation to cool it for a year and to use this moratorium period to explain to their parents—and to their jailers—what LSD and marijuana are, and why we want and intend to use them. I’ve suggested this as a conciliatory gesture to mollify and educate the older generation and to allow time for the younger people to learn more about how to turn on. I’m demanding that this period also be a moratorium on hysterical legislation and on punitive arrests of young people for the possession of LSD and marijuana.

If, as the end of one year, the older generation has not taken advantage of this cease-fire, I predict and indeed urge a firm statement on the part of everyone involved that they intend to resume the use of psychedelics, to exercise their constitutional right to expand their own consciousness—whatever the cost.

**PLAYBOY:** What do you say to the standard charge that LSD is too powerful and dangerous to entrust to the young?

**LEARY:** Well, none of us yet knows exactly how LSD can be used for the growth and benefit of the human being. It is a powerful releaser of energy as yet not fully understood. But if I’m confronted with the possibility that a 15-year-old or a 50-year-old is going to use a new form of energy that he doesn’t understand, I’ll back the 15-year-old every time. Why? Because a 15-year-old is going to use a new form of energy to have fun, to intensify sensation, to make love, for curiosity, for personal growth. Many 50-year-olds have lost their curiosity, have lost their ability to make love, have
dulled their openness to new sensations, and would use any form of new energy for power, control and warfare. So it doesn’t concern me at all that young people spend their time out from the educational and occupational assembly lines to experiment with consciousness, to dabble with new forms of experience and artistic expression. The present generation under the age of 25 is the wisest and holiest generation that the human race has ever seen. And, by God, those who are lamenting, derogating and imprisoning them, we should support them, listen to them and turn on with them.

PLAYBOY: If we wanted to take you up on that last suggestion, how would we go about it?

LEARY: Find a beloved friend who knows where to get LSD and how to run a session; or find a trusted and experienced LSD voyager to guide you on a trip.

PLAYBOY: Is it necessary to have a guide?

LEARY: Yes. Unless you have an experienced guide—at least for your first 10 or 15 sessions—it would be extremely risky.

PLAYBOY: What if a person can’t find either a guide or a source of LSD among his friends? Where does he go?

LEARY: LSD is against the law, and I certainly would not advise anyone to violate the law. I will say this, however: Throughout human history, men who have wanted to expand their consciousness, to find deeper meaning inside themselves, have been able to do it if they were willing to commit the time and energy to do so. In other times and countries, men would walk barefoot 2000 miles to find spiritual teachers who would turn them on to Buddha, Mohammed or Ramakrishna.

PLAYBOY: If you can’t say where one could buy LSD, can you tell us the formula for making it? We understand it can be synthesized in any well-equipped chemical laboratory.

LEARY: That’s true. But it would be irresponsible of me to reveal it. The unauthorized manufacture of LSD is now against the law.

PLAYBOY: Assuming you can get it, how do you take it? Can it be injected, or is it mostly just swallowed in a sugar cube?

LEARY: It can be injected or it can come in the form of powder or pills or in a solution, which is odorless, tasteless and colorless. In any case, you’re dealing with a very minute quantity. One hundred micrograms is a moderate dose.

PLAYBOY: For a session lasting how long?

LEARY: Eight to twelve hours.

PLAYBOY: What’s it like? What happens to you?

LEARY: If we’re speaking in a general way, what happens to everyone is the experience of incredible acceleration and intensification of all senses and of all mental processes—which can be very confusing if you’re not prepared for it. Around a thousand million signals fire off in your brain every second; during any second in an LSD session, you find yourself tuned in on thousands of these messages that ordinarily you don’t register consciously. And you may be getting an incredible number of simultaneous messages from different parts of your body. Since you’re not used to this, it can lead to incredible ecstasy or it can lead to confusion. Some people are freaked by this Niagara of sensory input. Instead of three things happening in tidy sequence, you’re suddenly flooded by hundreds of lights and colors and sensations and images, and you can get quite lost.

You sense a strange, powerful force beginning to unloose and radiate through your body. In normal perception, we are aware of static symbols. But as the LSD effect takes hold, everything begins to move, and this relentlessly, impersonal, slowly swelling movement will continue through the several hours of the session. It’s as though for all of your normal waking life you have been looking at a still photograph in an awkward, stereotyped posture; suddenly the show comes alive, balloons out to several dimensions and becomes irradiated with color and energy.

The first thing you notice is an incredible enhancement of sensory awareness. Take the sense of sight. LSD vision is to normal vision as normal vision is to the picture on a badly tuned television set. Under LSD, it’s as though you have microscopes up to your eyes, in which you see jewel-like, radiant details of anything your eyes fall upon. You are really seeing for the first time—not static, symbolic perception of learned things, but patterns of light bouncing off the objects around you and hurting at the speed of light into the mosaic of rods and cones in the retina of your eye. Everything seems alive. Everything is an appreciation of all the particular qualities of food—its texture and resiliency and viscosity—such as we are not conscious of in a normal state of awareness.

PLAYBOY: How about the sense of smell?

LEARY: This is one of the most overwhelming aspects of an LSD experience. It seems as though for the first time you are breathing life, and you remember with amusement and distaste that plastic, odorless, artificial gas that you used to consider air. During the LSD experience, you discover that you’re actually inhaling an atmosphere composed of millions of microscopic strands of olfactory ticker tape, exploding in your nostrils with ecstatic meaning. When you sit across the room from a woman during an LSD session, you’re aware of thousands of penetrating chemical messages floating from her through the air into your sensory center: a symphony of a thousand odors that all of us exude at every moment—the shampoo she uses, her cologne, her sweat, the exhaust and discharge from her digestive system, her sexual perfume, the fragrance of her clothing—grenades of eroticism exploding in the olfactory cell.

PLAYBOY: Does the sense of touch become equally erotic?

LEARY: Touch becomes electric as well as erotic. I remember a moment during one session in which my wife leaned over and lightly touched the palm of my hand with her finger. Immediately a hundred thousand end cells in my hand exploded in soft orgasm. Ecstatic energies pulsed up my arms and rocketed into my brain, where another hundred thousand cells softly exploded in pure, delicate pleasure. The distance between my wife’s finger and the palm of my hand was about 50 miles of space, filled with cotton candy, infiltrated with thousands of silver wires hurling energy back and forth. Wave after wave of exquisite energy pulsed from her finger. Wave upon wave of ethereal tissue rapture—delicate, shuddering—course back and forth from her finger to my palm.

PLAYBOY: And this rapture was erotic?
PLAYBOY: Would you elaborate?

LEARY: I'm saying simply that sex under LSD becomes miraculously enhanced and intensified. I don't mean that it simply generates erotic energy. It doesn't automatically produce a longer erection. Rather, it increases your sensitivity a thousand percent. Let me put it this way: Compared with sex under LSD, the way you've been making love—no matter how ecstatic the pleasure you think you get from it—is like making love to a department-store-window dummy. In sensory and cellular communion on LSD, you may spend a half hour making love with eyeballs, another half hour making love with breath. As you spin through a thousand sensory and cellular organic changes, she does, too. Ordinarily, sexual communication involves one's own chemicals, pressure and interactions of a very localized nature—in what the psychologists call the erogenous zones. A vulgar, dirty concept, I think. 'When you think of the erogenous zones, you-and there aren't words adequate to describe it, anyway. You won't know what it's like until you try it yourself—and then I'll tell you.

PLAYBOY: We've heard that some women ordinarily have difficulty achieving orgasm under LSD. Is that true?

LEARY: Yes. Several hundred.

PLAYBOY: What about a man?

LEARY: Several hundred.

PLAYBOY: What about a woman?

LEARY: This preoccupation with the number of orgasms is a hang-up for many men and women. It's as crude and vulgar a concept as wondering how much she paid for the negligee. Still, there must be some sort of physiological comparison. If a woman can have several hundred orgasms, how many can a man have under optimum conditions?

LEARY: It would depend entirely on the amount of sexual—and psychedelic—experience the man has had. I can speak only for myself and about my own experience. I can only compare what I was with what I am now. In the last six years, my openness to my responsiveness to my participation in every form of sensory expression has multiplied a thousandfold.

PLAYBOY: This aspect of LSD has been hinted at previously but never spelled out in public until now. Why?

LEARY: The sexual impact is, of course, the open but private secret about LSD, which none of us has talked about in the last few years. It's socially dangerous enough to say that LSD helps you find divinity and helps you discover yourself. You're already in trouble when you say that. But then you announce that the psychic experience of the whole sexual experience, you're asking to bring the whole middle-aged, middle-class monolith down on your head. At the present time, however, I'm under a 30-year sentence of imprisonment, which is essentially a life term; and in addition, I am under indictment on a second marijuana offense involving a 16-year sentence. Since there is hardly anything more that middle-aged, middle-class authority can do to me—and since the secret is out anyway among the young—I feel I'm at this moment to say what we've never said before: that sexual ecstasy is the basic reason for the current LSD boom.

When Dr. Goddard, the head of the Food and Drug Administration, announced in a Senate hearing that ten percent of our college students are taking LSD, did you ever wonder why? Sure, they're discovering God and meaning; sure, they're discovering themselves; but did you really think that sex wasn't the fundamental reason for this surging, youthful social boom? You can no more do research on LSD and leave sexual ecstasy than you can do microscopic research on tissue and leave our cells.

LSD is not an automatic trigger to sexual awakening, however. The first ten times you take it, you might not be able to have a sexual experience at all, because you're so overwhelmed and delighted—or frightened and confused—by the novelty; the idea of having sex might be irrelevant or incomprehensible at the moment. But it depends upon the setting and the partner. It is almost inevitable, if a man and his mate take LSD together, that their sexual energies will be unimaginably intensified, and unless clumsiness or fright on the part of one or the other blocks it, it will lead to a deeper experience than they ever thought possible.

From the beginning of our research, I have been aware of this tremendous personal power in LSD. You must be very careful to take it only with someone you know really well, because it's almost inevitable that a woman will fall in love with the man who shares her LSD experience. Deep and lasting neurological imprints, profound emotional bonds, can develop as a result of an LSD session—bonds that can last a lifetime. For this reason, I have always been extremely cautious about running sessions with men and women. We always try to have a subject's husband or wife present during his or her first session, so that as these powerful urges develop, they are directed in ways that can be lived out responsibly after the session.

PLAYBOY: Are you preaching psychedelic monogamy?

LEARY: Well, I can't generalize, but one of the great lessons I've learned from LSD is that every man contains the essence of all men and every woman has within her all women. I remember a session a few years ago in which, with horror and ecstasy, I opened my eyes and...
looked into the eyes of my wife and was pulled into the deep blue pools of her being. I stood in the center of her mind, experiencing everything that she was experiencing, knowing every thought that she had ever had. As my eyes were riveted to hers, her face began to melt and change. I saw her as a young girl, as a baby, as an old woman with gray hair and a mustache. I saw her as a witch, a Madonna, a nagging crone, a radiant queen, a Byzantine virgin, a tired, worldly-wise Oriental whose had seen every sight of life repeated a thousand times. She was all women, all woman, the essence of female—eyes smiling, quizzically, resignedly, defiantly, always inviting. "See me, hear me, join me, merge with me, keep the dance going." Now, the implications of this experience for sex and mating, I think, are obvious. It's because of this, not because of moral restrictions or restraints, that I've been extremely monogamous in my use of LSD over the last six years.

PLAYBOY: When you speak of monogamy, do you mean complete sexual fidelity to one woman?

LEARY: Well, the notion of running around trying to find different mates is a very popular one. We live in a world of expanding population in which there are more and more beautiful young girls coming off the assembly line each month. It's obvious that the sexual criteria of the past are going to be changed, and that what's demanded of creatures with our sensory and cellular repertoire is not just one affair after another with one young body after another, but the exploration of the incredible depths and varieties of your own identity with a single member of the opposite sex. This involves time and commitment to the voyage.

PLAYBOY: If you mean to imply that you've had only one bed partner in the last six years?

LEARY: I've had more than one long-term relationship during this period. But there is a certain kind of neurological and cellular fidelity that develops. I have said for many years now that in the future the grounds for divorce would not be that your wife went to bed with another man and bounced around on a mattress for an hour or two, but that your wife had an LSD session with somebody else, because the bonds and the connections that develop are so powerful.

PLAYBOY: It's been reported that when you are in the company of women, quite a lot of them turn to you. As a matter of fact, a friend of yours told us that you could have two or three different women every night if you wanted to. Is he right?

LEARY: For the most part, during the last six years, I have lived very quietly in our research centers. But on lecture tours and in highly enthusiastic social gatherings, there is no question that a charismatic public figure does generate attraction and stimulate a sexual response.

PLAYBOY: How often do you return this response?

LEARY: Every woman has built into her cells and tissues the longing for a hero-sage-mythic male to open up and share her own divinity. But casual sexual encounters do not satisfy this deep longing. Any charismatic person who is conscious of his own mythical potency awakens this basic hunger in women and pays reverence to it at the level that is harmonious and appropriate at the time. Compulsive body grabbing, however, is rarely the vehicle of such communication.

PLAYBOY: Do you disapprove of the idea of casual romance—catalyzed by LSD?

LEARY: Well, I'm no one to tell anyone else what to do. But I would say, if you use LSD to make out sexually in the selective sense, then you'll be a very humiliated and embarrassed person, because it's no work. Of course, both you and the LSD, her eyes would be microscopic, and she'd see very plainly what you were up to, coming on with some heavy-handed, mustache-twisting routine. You'd look like a consummate ass, and she'd laugh at you, or you'd look like a monster and she'd see right into your paranoid state. Nothing good can happen with LSD if it's used crudely or for power or manipulative purposes.

PLAYBOY: Suppose you met a girl at a party, developed an immediate rapport, and you both decided to share an LSD trip that same night. Could it work under those circumstances?

LEARY: You must remember that in taking LSD with someone else, you are voluntarily relinquishing all of your personality defenses and opening yourself up in a very vulnerable manner. If you and the girl are ready to do this, there would be an immediate and deep rapport if you took a trip together. People from the LSD cult would be able to do it upon a brief meeting, but an inexperienced person would probably find it extremely confusing, and the people might become quite isolated from each other. They might be whisked into the torture or confusion of their own inner workings and forget entirely that the other person is there.

PLAYBOY: According to some reports, LSD can trigger the acting out of latent homosexual impulses in ostensibly heterosexual men and women. Is there any truth to that, in your opinion?

LEARY: On the contrary, the fact is that LSD is a specific cure for homosexuality. It's well known that most sexual perversions are the result not of biological bonds but of freaky, dislocating childhood experiences of one kind or another. Consequently, it's not surprising that we've had many cases of long-term homosexuals who, under LSD, discover that they are not only genitally but genetically male, that they are basically attracted to females. The most famous and public of such cases is that of Allen Ginsberg, who has said that the first time he turned on to women was during an LSD session several years ago. But this is only one of many similar cases.

PLAYBOY: Has this happened with Lesbian girls also?

LEARY: I was just going to cite such a case. An extremely attractive girl came down to our training center in Mexico. She was a Lesbian and she was very active sexually, but all of her energy was devoted to making it with girls. She was at an LSD session at one of our cottages and went down to the beach and saw this young man in a bathing suit and—flash!—for the first time in her life the cellular electricity was flowing in her body and it bridged the gap. Her subsequent sexual choices were almost exclusively members of the opposite sex.

PLAYBOY: The same drug is also a powerful panacea for impotence and frigidity, both of which, like homosexuality, are symbolic screw-ups. The LSD experience puts you in touch with the wisdom of your body, of your nervous system, of your cells, of your organs. Are you the closer you get to the message of the body, the more obvious it becomes that it's constructed and designed to procreate and keep the life stream going. When you're confronted with this basic cellular fact under LSD, you realize that your impotence, or your frigidity, is caused by neuro-psychological hang-ups of fear or shame that make no sense to your cells, that have nothing to do with the biochemical forces inside your body urging you to merge and mate with a member of the opposite sex.

PLAYBOY: Does LSD always work as a sexual cure-all?

LEARY: Certainly not. LSD is no guarantee of any specific social or sexual outcome. One man may take LSD and leave wife and family and go off to be a monk on the banks of the Ganges. Another may take LSD and go back to his wife. It's a highly individual situation. Highly unpredictable. Depending on how you see, there can come a microscopic perception of your routine social and professional life. You may discover to your horror that you're living a robot existence, that your relationships with your boss, your wife and your family are stereotyped, empty and devoid of meaning. At this point, there might come a desire to renounce this hollow existence, to collect your thoughts, to go away and cloister yourself from the world like a monk while you figure out what kind of a life you want to go back to, if any.

Conversely, we've found that in giving LSD to members of monastic sects, there has been a definite tendency for them to leave the monastic life and to find a mating relationship. Several were men in
LEARY: Has this happened to you often during a session?

PLAYBOY: It's happened to me about half of the 311 times I've taken LSD. And every experience of terror-because nobody sits there transfigured with fear, afraid to move. For the experienced voyager, however, this revelation can be exciting: You've climbed inside Einstein's formula, penetrated to the ultimate nature of matter and you're pulsing in harmony with its primal, cosmic beat.

PLAYBOY: Do you think there may be a deeper level of consciousness beyond the precellular?

LEARY: I hope so. We know that there are many other levels of energy within and around us, and I hope that within our lifetimes we will have these opened up to us, because the fact is that there

PLAYBOY: Is there a fifth level of awareness?

LEARY: Yes, and this one is even more strange and terrifying. This is the precellular level, which is experienced only under a heavy dosage of LSD. Your nerve cells are aware—as Professor Einstein was aware—that all matter, all structure, is pulsating energy; well, there is a shattering moment in the deep psychedelic session when your body, and the world around you, dissolves into shimmering latticeworks of pulsating white waves, into silent, subcellular worlds of shuttling energy. But this phenomenon is not new. It's been reported by mystics and visionaries throughout the last 4000 years of recorded history as "the white light" or the "dance of energy." Suddenly you realize that everything you thought of as reality or even as life itself—incorporating your body—is just a dance of particles. You find yourself horribly alone in a dead, impersonal world of raw energy feeding on your sense organs. This, of course, is one of the oldest Oriental philosophic notions, that nothing exists except in the chemistry of your own consciousness. But when it first happens to you, through the experience of LSD, it can come as a terrifying, isolating discovery. At this point, the unprepared LSD subject often screams out: "I'm dead!" And he sits there transfixed with fear, afraid to move. For the experienced voyager, however, this revelation can be exciting: You've climbed inside Einstein's formula, penetrated to the ultimate nature of matter and you're pulsing in harmony with its primal, cosmic beat.

PLAYBOY: Has this happened to you often during a session?

LEARY: It's happened to me about half of the 311 times I've taken LSD. And every time it begins to happen, no matter how much experience you've had, there is that moment of terror because nobody likes to see the comfortable world of objects and symbols and even cells disintegrate into the ultimate physical design.

PLAYBOY: Do you think there may be a deeper level of consciousness beyond the precellular?

LEARY: I hope so. We know that there are many other levels of energy within and around us, and I hope that within our lifetimes we will have these opened up to us, because the fact is that there
memories of every previous organism that has contributed to your present existence. In your DNA code, you have the genetic history of your father and mother. It goes back, back through the generations, through the eons. Your body carries a protein record of everything that's happened to you since the moment you were conceived as a one-cell organism. It's a living history of every form of energy transformation on this planet back to that thunderbolt in the Pre-Cambrian mud that spawned the life process over two billion years ago. When LSD subjects report regression and reincarnation visions, this is not mysterious or supernatural. It's simply modern biology at work.

PLAYBOY: Tell us more about these visions.

LEARY: We don't know how these memories are stored, but countless events from early and even intra-uterine life are registered in your brain and can be flashed into consciousness during an LSD high.

PLAYBOY: Do you merely remember them, or do you actually relive them?

LEARY: The experiences that come from LSD are actually relived—in sight, sound, smell, taste and touch—exactly the way they happened before.

PLAYBOY: If it's an experience from very early life, how can you be sure it's a true memory rather than a vivid hallucination?

LEARY: It's possible to check out some of these ancient memories, but for the most part these memory banks, which are built into your protein cellular strands, can never be checked on by external observation. In your DNA code, you can release these memories of the nine perilous and exciting months before you were born.

PLAYBOY: Can these memory visions be made selective? Is it possible to travel back in time at will?

LEARY: Yes, it's the way things happen to be the particular project that I've been working on most recently with LSD. I've charted my own family tree and traced it back as far as I can. I've tried to plumb the gene pools from which my ancestors emerged in Ireland and France.

PLAYBOY: With what success?

LEARY: Well, there are certain moments in my evolutionary history that I can reach all the time, but there are certain untidy corners in my racial path that I often get boxed into, and because they are frightening, I don't always open my eyes and stop it. In many of these sessions, back about 300 years, I often run across a particular French-appearing man with a black mustache, a rather dangerous-looking guy. And there are several highly eccentric recurrent sequences in my country that you can quite literally be embarrassed when I re-lived them in LSD sessions—goings on that shocked my 20th Century person.

PLAYBOY: What sort of going on?

LEARY: Moments of propagation—scenes of rough ancestral sexuality in Irish bars, rooms, in haystacks, in canopied beds, on covered wagons, on beaches, on the moonlit jungle floor—and moments of crisis in which my forebears escape from fang, from spear, from conspiracy, from tidal wave and avalanche. I've concluded that the imprints most deeply engraved in the neurological memory bank have to do with these life-affirming, exultation and exhilaration in the perpetuation and survival of the species.

PLAYBOY: But how can you be sure they ever happened?

LEARY: You can't. They may all be nothing more than luridly melodramatic hallucinations conjured up by my forebrain. But whatever they are—memory or imagination—it's the most exciting adventure I've ever been involved in.

PLAYBOY: In this connection, according to a spokesman for the student left, many former campus activists who've gone the LSD route are "more concerned with getting it out of their systems than with what's happening in their heads than what's happening in the world." Any comment?

LEARY: There's a certain amount of truth in that. The insight of LSD leads you to concern yourself more with internal or spiritual values; you realize that it doesn't make much difference to you what you do on the outside unless you change the inside. If all the Negroes and left-wing college students in the world had Cadillacs and full control of society, they would still be involved in an anarchistic social system unless they opened themselves up first.

PLAYBOY: Aren't these young activists among an increasing number of students, writers, artists and musicians whom one critic has called "the psychedelic dropouts"—LSD users who find themselves destitute of motivation, unable to readjust to reality or to resume their roles in society?

LEARY: There is an LSD dropout problem, but it's nothing to worry about. It's something to cheer. The lesson I have learned from over 300 LSD sessions, and which I have been passing on to others, can be stated in six syllables: Turn on, tune in, drop out. "Turn on" means to contact the ancient energies and wisdoms that are built into your nervous system. They provide unspeakable pleasure and revelation. "Tune in" means to harness and communicate these new perceptions in a harmonious dance with the external world. "Drop out" means to detach yourself from the tribal game.

Current models of social adjustment—mechanized, computerized, socialized, intellectualized, televised, Sanitized—make no sense to the new LSD generation who see clearly that American society is becoming an air-conditioned ant hill. In every generation of human history, thoughtful men have turned on and dropped out of the tribal game, and thus stimulated the larger society to lurch ahead. Every historical advance has resulted from the stern pressure of visionaries who have created a counter-culture to established values; you realize that it doesn't make much difference to you what you do on the outside unless you change the inside.
more manpower in the future than the automobile industry has produced in the last 20 years. In our technological society of the future, the problem will be not to get people to work, but to develop graceful, fulfilling ways of living a more serene, beautiful and creative life. Psilocybin will help to point the way.

PLAYBOY: Concerning LSD's influence on creativity, Dr. B. William Murphy, a psychoanalyst for the National Institute of Mental Health, takes the view that there is no evidence “that drugs of any kind increase creative power. One unfortunate effect is to produce an illusion dangerous to people who are creative, who cease then to be motivated to produce something that is genuinely new. And the illusion is bad in making those who are not creative get the idea that they are.” What's your reaction?

LEARY: It's an unfortunate that most of the scientific studies on creativity have been done by psychologists who don't have one creative bone in their body. They have studied people who by definition are emphatically uncreative—namely, graduate students. Is it any wonder that all the “scientific” studies of LSD and creativity have shown no creative results? But to answer your question, I must admit that LSD and marijuana do not allow you to walk to the piano and ripple off great fugues. Psychedelic drugs, particularly marijuana, merely enhance the senses. They allow you to see and hear new patterns of energy that suggest new patterns for composition. In this way, they enhance the creative perspective, but the ability to convert your new perspective, however glorious it may be, into a communication form still requires the technical skill of a musician or a painter or a composer.

But if you want to find out whether LSD and marijuana have helped creative people, don't listen to a psychiatrist; don't listen to a Government bureaucrat. Find the artist or ask him. If you want to find out about creativity, ask the creative person. If you want to know what LSD does, and whether it's good or bad, don't listen to a cop; don't listen to messianic fanatics like Timothy Leary. Find some friend who has taken LSD and ask him. He's the person to believe — because you'll know how likely he is to distort things — and then you'll be able to judge on the basis of his statements what LSD has done for him. Then ask other friends about their experiences. Base your opinion about LSD on a series of such interviews, and you will have collected more hard data than any of the public health officials and police officers who are making daily scare statements to the press these days.

PLAYBOY: Are any of these scare statements true? According to a recent report on narcotics addiction published by the Medical Society of the County of New York, for example, “those with unstable personalities may experience LSD-induced psychoses.” Is this true?

LEARY: In over 5000 people that I have personally observed taking LSD, we've had only four cases of prolonged psychoses — a matter of, say, two or three weeks after the session. All of these had been in a mental hospital before, and they were people who could not commit themselves to any stable relationships. And all of these people had nothing going in their lives. They were drifting or floating, with no home or family or any roots, no stable, ongoing life situation to return to. It's dangerous to take a trip if you have no internal trust and no external place to turn to afterward.

PLAYBOY: The same New York Medical Society report also stated that “normal, well-adjusted persons can undergo an acute psychotic break under the influence of LSD.” Is there any truth to that?

LEARY: Everyone, normal or neurotic, experiences some fear and confusion during the high-dose LSD session. The outcome depends upon your environment and your traveling companions. That's why it's tremendously important that the LSD session be conducted in a protected place, that the person be prepared and that he have an experienced and understanding guide to support and shield him from intrusion and interruption. When unprepared people take LSD in bad surroundings, and when there's no one present who has the skill and courage to guide them through it, then paranoid episodes are possible.

PLAYBOY: Will you describe them?

LEARY: There are any number of forms a paranoid episode can take. You can find yourself feeling that you've lived most of your life in a universe completely of your own, not really touching and harmonizing with the flow of the people and the energies around you. It seems to you that everyone else, and every other thing in your environment, is out of contact and communication, and only you are isolated by your egocentricity. Every action around you fits perfectly into this paranoid mosaic. Every glance, every look of boredom, every sound, every smile becomes a confirmation of the fact that everyone knows that you are the only one in the universe that's not swinging lovingly and gracefully with the rest of the cosmic dance. I've experienced this myself.

I've also sat with hundreds of people who have been panicked because they were trapped at the level of cellular reincarnation, where they looked out and saw that their body had scales like a fish or felt that they had turned into an animal. And I've sat with people who were caught on the fifth level, in that eerie, inhuman world of swirling vibrations. But all these episodes can be dealt with easily by an experienced guide who recognizes where the LSD tripper is caught. He can bring you back down quite simply by holding a candle in front of you, or getting you to concentrate on your breathing, or having you lie down and getting you to feel your body merging with the mattress or the floor. If he understands the map of consciousness, it's very easy to bring you back to a more recognizable and less frightening level. With his help, you'll be able to exit in and learn from the experience.

If he's frightened or unprepared, however, or if he acts so as to protect his own social interests, your own terror and confusion are naturally increased. If he treats you as a psychotic rather than as one who is seriously groping with basic problems that you should be encouraged to face and work through, you may be forced into a psychotic state. Every case of prolonged LSD psychosis is the fault not of the drug nor of the drug taker but of the people around him who lose their cool and call the cops or the doctors. The lesson here is to fear not your own psychological nature—which is basically OK—but to fear the diagnosing mind of the psychiatrist. Ninety percent of the bad LSD trips are provoked by psychiatric propaganda, which creates an atmosphere of fear rather than of courage and trust. If the psychiatrists had their way, we'd all be patients.

PLAYBOY: Speaking of patients, a recent Time essay reported that a survey in Los Angeles "showed as many as 200 victims of bad trips in the city's hospitals at one time." Does that sound to you like a realistic figure?

LEARY: I'd like to know who conducted the survey and where they got their figures, because it's contradicted by the known facts. I was recently told by the director of a large California hospital, which handles LSD cases, that most LSD panic subjects are given a tranquilizer and sent home without even being admitted. The same is true at Bellevue and throughout the country.

PLAYBOY: In the same essay, Time wrote: "Under the influence of LSD, nonswimmers think they can swim, and others think they can fly. One young man tried to stop a car on Los Angeles' Wilshire Boulevard and was hit and killed. A magazine salesman became convinced that he was the Messiah." Are these cases, and others like them, representative reactions to LSD, in your opinion?

LEARY: I would say that one case in 10,000 is going to flip out and run out into the street and do something bizarre. But these are the cases that get reported in the papers. There are 8000 Americans who die every year from barbiturates and it never hits the papers. Thousands more die in car crashes and from lung cancer induced by smoking. That isn't news, either. But one LSD kid rushes out and takes off his clothes in the street and it's headlines in the New York Daily
...you are aware of the millions of cells then you wait again, and wait, and have the strength to beat again. You're continue. Because of LSD's distention of That's a new experience, nothing to be come aware of its pulsing nerves and experience is that the heart is stopping. Fairly common. When somebody of physiological change in your heart, but the I am waiting for the scientific evidence. Though it hasn't led to any mentioned cases of homicide or suicide at- tributable to the LSD experience. So I'm not surprised that the cases Dr. Cole has heard about from his research- ers are negative. But Dr. Cole doesn't listen to the hundreds of thousands of people who have taken LSD under intelligent, aesthetic, carefully planned circumstances and have had their lives changed for the better. For one hundred letters a week that I receive from people who are profoundly grateful to have been dramatically opened up by LSD. He hears only the horror stories. If you talk to a moritician, you'll come to the conclusion that everyone who is of any importance is dead. If you talk to a law-enforcer, you'll find that practically everyone is a criminal, actual or potential. And if you talk to a psychi- atrist, you'll hear nothing but gloomy lexicons of psychopathology. What Dr. Cole thinks about LSD is irrelevant, because for every case that his Federal re- searchers have studied, there are 5000 serious-minded, courageous young lay- men out in the universities and out in the seminaries and in their own homes and on the beaches who are taking LSD and having fantastically beautiful experiences.

PLAYBOY: When you testified in May before a Senate subcommittee investigating juvenile delinquency and drugs, you took your teenage son and daughter along. Why not Mrs. Leary?

LEARY: The mother of my two children died in 1955.

PLAYBOY: Didn't you marry again?

LEARY: Yes—to a beautiful model named Mena. The LSD session I described earlier was with her.
PLAYBOY: Yet restrictive and prohibitive laws against the use of LSD have already been passed in California, Nevada and New Jersey, and several members of Congress have urged Federal legislation outlawing its manufacture or possession.
LEARY: Such laws are unrealistic and unconstitutional. Over 15 percent of college students are currently using LSD. Do the so-called characterized politicians and police types really want to put our brightest and most creative youngsters in prison for possession of a colorless, odorless, tasteless, nonaddictive, mind-opening substance? Irrational, senile legislation preventing people from pursuing private, intimate experiences—sexual or spiritual—cannot and will not be obeyed. We are currently planning to appeal any conviction for possession of LSD on constitutional grounds. But the Federal Government is opposed to laws penalizing possession of LSD, because it recognizes the impossibility of enforcement and the unconstitutionality of such statutes. Of course, this ambiguous situation is temporary. In 15 years the bright kids who are turning on now will be shaping public opinion, writing our novels, running our universities and repealing the hysterical laws that are now being passed.

PLAYBOY: In what way are they hysterical?
LEARY: They're hysterical because the men who are passing them have allowed their ignorance of LSD to escalate into irrationality. Instinctively, they put LSD in the same bag with heroin. They think of drug taking as a criminal activity practiced by stuporous escapists and crazed, deranged minds. The daily diatribes of police officials and many legislators to that effect completely ignore the fact that the use of LSD is a white-collar, upper-middle-class, college-educate phenomenon. The LSD user is not a criminal type. He's not an underground character or a junkie. He doesn't seek to hide, or to apologize for, his activities. While more and more laws are being passed, restricting these activities, more and more people are engaging in them. LSD is being manufactured by people in their own homes and in small laboratories. If this continues, in ten years the LSD group will constitute one of our largest minorities. Then what are the lawmakers going to do?

PLAYBOY: What should they do, in your opinion?
LEARY: As they learn more about LSD, I think—I hope—they will recognize that there will have to be special legislation. There should be laws about the manufacture of LSD. It is incredibly powerful and can be a frightening experience. It is not a narcotic and not a medical drug; it doesn't cure any illness. It is a new form of energy. Just as a new form of legislation had to be developed for radioactive isotopes, so will there need to be something comparable for LSD. And I think some LSD equivalent of the Atomic Energy Commission and some special licensing procedures should be set up to deal with this new class of drugs.

PLAYBOY: What sort of procedures would you recommend?
LEARY: You can't legalize and control manufacture until you've worked out a constructive way of licensing or authorizing possession. There are many individuals who should be provided with a legitimate access to chemicals that expand their minds. If we don't do this, we'll have a free market or a black market. During Prohibition, when alcohol was prohibited, it was suppressed; then you had bathtub gin and bootleg poisons of all sorts. The Government received no taxes and the consumer had no guarantee that what he was buying was safe and effective. But if marijuana and LSD were put under some form of licensing where responsible, serious-minded people could purchase these chemicals, then the manufacture could be supervised and the sales could be both regulated and taxed. A healthy and profitable situation would result for all involved.

PLAYBOY: How would a person demonstrate his responsibility and seriousness in applying for a license?
LEARY: The licensing of the use of powerful psychedelic drugs like LSD should be along the lines of the airplane pilot's license: intensive study and preparation, plus very stringent testing for fitness and competence.

PLAYBOY: What criteria would you use for determining fitness and competence?
LEARY: No one has the right to tell anyone else what he should or should not do with this great and last frontier of American consciousness. The individual who applies for a license, would demonstrate his seriousness by studying manuals, passing written tests and getting a doctor's certificate of psychological and physical soundness. The licensing for use of powerful psychedelic drugs like LSD should be along the lines of the airplane pilot's license: intensive study and preparation, plus very stringent testing for fitness and competence.

PLAYBOY: What criteria would you use for determining fitness and competence?
LEARY: If I win my case in the higher courts—and my lawyers believe I will—this will have wide implications. It will suggest that future arrests for marijuana must be judged on the merits of the individual case rather than the arbitrary implementation of irrational and excessive regulation. I consider the marijuana laws to be unjust laws. My 30-year sentence and $30,000 fine simply pointed up in a rather public way the severity and harshness of the current statutes, which are clearly in violation of several amendments to the Constitution.

PLAYBOY: Which amendments?
LEARY: The First Amendment, which guarantees the right of spiritual exploration; and the Fifth Amendment, which guarantees immunity from self-incrimination. The fact that I'm being imprisoned for not paying a tax on a substance that, if I had applied for a license, would have led to my automatic arrest, is clearly self-incrimination. The current marijuana statutes are also in violation of the Eighth Amendment, which forbids cruel and unusual punishments; and of the Ninth Amendment, which guarantees certain personal liberties not specifically enumerated in the other amendments.

PLAYBOY: The implications of your arrest and conviction in Laredo were still being debated when the police raided your establishment here in Millbrook. We've read several different versions of just what took place that night. Will you give us a step-by-step account?
LEARY: On Saturday, April 16th, there were present at our center in Millbrook 29 adults and 12 children. Among them were three Ph. D. psychologists, one M. D. psychiatrist, three physicists, five journalists on professional assignments and three photographers. At one-thirty A.M., all but three guests had retired. I was in bed. My son and a friend of his were in the room talking to me about a term paper that my son was writing. We heard a noise outside in the hallway. My son opened the door, slammed it and said, "Wow, Dad, there's about fifty cops out there!" I jumped out of bed and was in the middle of the room when the...
One of the sheriff's statements to the press was that the raiding party discovered most of the occupants in the house in a state of semi-undress—which sounds pretty lurid until you realize that almost everyone in the house was in bed asleep at the time of the raid. After the initial shock of finding armed and uniformed men in our bedrooms, all of my guests reacted with surprise, humor and tolerance to five hours of captivity. The members of the raiding party, on the other hand, were extremely nervous. It's obvious that they had in mind some James Bond fantasy of invading the Oriental headquarters of some sexual smears, and they were extremely jumpy as they went about their search of the entire house. One interesting aspect of the raid was that all of the women present were stripped and searched.

PLAYBOY: Did they have a warrant?

LEARY: They had a warrant, but we claim it was defective and illegal.

PLAYBOY: In what way?

LEARY: In the Bill of Rights it clearly states that the Government cannot just swear out a warrant to go into anyone's house on general suspicion and speculation. Specifically, a search warrant can be issued only on the basis of tangible evidence, usually from an informer, that a specific amount of defined, illegal substance is present at a certain place and time. There was no such probable cause for the raid at Millbrook. Among the "causes" cited was that cars with out-of-state licenses were parked in my driveway, and that girls under the age of 16 were playing around the yard on a certain day when it was under surveillance. The "causes" cited was that cars with out-of-state licenses were parked in my driveway, and that girls under the age of 16 were playing around the yard on a certain day when it was under surveillance.

PLAYBOY: How would that be a cause?

LEARY: How, indeed? Another alleged "cause" for the raid was that I am "a known and admitted trafficker in drugs." Well, none of these espionage reports seem to mean—or to my lawyers—to justify the issuance of a no-knock, nighttime warrant. They authorized the breaking of windows and doors to obtain entry to a private house.

PLAYBOY: What is the current status of the charges against you?

LEARY: We are now involved in nine pieces of litigation on this raid. The American Civil Liberties Union has entered the case with a supporting brief, and while I can't comment on the technicalities of the litigation, we have a large group of bright young turned-on civil libertarian lawyers walking around with smiles on their faces.

PLAYBOY: Do you mean that your lawyers are on LSD?

LEARY: I don't feel I should comment on that. Let me say, however, that you don't need to use anything to be turned on, in the sense that you've turned in to the world.

PLAYBOY: Dr. Humphrey Osmond of the New Jersey Neuropsychiatric Institute—the man who coined the word "psychadelic"—has described you as "Irish and revolutionary, and to a good degree reckless." He was suggesting that if you had been more careful, you might not have been arrested in Laredo or Millbrook.

LEARY: I plead guilty to the charges of being an Irish revolutionary. But I don't think I'm careless about anything that's important.

PLAYBOY: Wasn't it careless to risk the loss of your freedom by carrying a half ounce of marijuana into Mexico?

LEARY: Well, that's like saying: Wouldn't it be careless for a Christian to carry the Bible to Russia? I just can't be bothered with paranoia about wire tapping, surveillance and police traps. It's been well known for several years that I'm using psychedelic drugs in my own home and in my own center for the use of myself and my own family. So at any time the Government wanted to make an issue of this, it certainly could. But I can't live my life in secrecy or panic paranoia. I've never bothered to take a lot of elementary precautions, for example, about my phone being bugged or my actions being under surveillance—both of which the police admit. I would say that if there was carelessness in Laredo, it was carelessness on the part of the Government officials in provoking a case that has already changed public attitudes and will inevitably change the law on the possession and use of marijuana by thoughtful adults in this country. The Narcotics Bureau is in trouble. I'm not.

PLAYBOY: But suppose all appeals fail and you do go to prison. What will happen to your children and to your work?

LEARY: My children will continue—and will perhaps even learn a little bit more than they would have learned. I'm the freest man in America today. If you're free in mind and heart, you're not in trouble. I think that the people who are trying to put other people in jail and to control basic evolutionary energies like sex and psychedelic chemicals are in trouble, because they're swimming upstream against the two-billion-year tide of cellular evolution.

PLAYBOY: What would you say is the most important lesson you've learned from your personal use of LSD?

LEARY: First and last, the understanding that basic to the life impulse is the question, "Should we go on with life?" This is the only real issue, when you come down to it, in the evolutionary cosmic sense: whether to make it with a member of the opposite sex and keep it going—or not to. At the deepest level of consciousness, this question comes up over and over again. I've struggled with it in scores of LSD sessions. How did we get here and into this mess? How do we get out? There are two ways out of the basic philosophic isolation of man: You can kill your way out—or have children, which is immortality of a sort. Or you can step off the wheel, Buddhism, the most powerful psychology that man has ever developed, says essentially that, my choice, however, is to keep the life game going. I'm Hindu, not Buddhist.

Beyond this affirmation of my own life, I've learned to attach my attention to the philosophic questions that hit on the really shrinking, crucial issues: Who wrote the cosmic script? What does the DNA code expect of me? Is the big genetic-code show live or on tape? Who is the sponsor? Are we completely trapped inside our nervous system, or are we stretching our attention—make real contact with anyone else out there? I intend to spend the rest of my life, with psychedelic help, searching for the answers to these questions—and-en-
Playboy: What role do you think psychedelics will play in the everyday life of the future?

Leary: A starring role. LSD is only the first of many new chemicals that will exhilarate learning, expand consciousness and enhance memory in years to come. These chemicals will inevitably revolutionize our procedures of education, child rearing and social behavior. Within one generation, through the use of these chemical keys to the nervous system as regular tools of learning, you will be asking your children, when they come home from school, not "What book are you reading?" but "Which molecules are you using to open up new Libraries of Congress inside your nervous system?" I don't know if there'll ever be courses in Marijuana 1A and 1B, as a prerequisite to LSD 101, but there's no doubt that chemicals will be the central method of education in the future. The reason for this, of course, is that the nervous system, and learning and memory itself, is a chemical process. A society in which a large percentage of the population changes consciousness regularly and harmoniously with psychedelic drugs will bring about a very different way of life.

Playboy: Will there be a day, as some science-fiction writers predict, when people will be taking trips, rather than drinks, at psychedelic cocktail parties?

Leary: It's happening already. In this country, there are already functions at which LSD may be served. I was at a large dance recently where two thirds of the guests were on LSD. And during a scholarly LSD conference in San Francisco a few months ago, I went along with 400 people on a picnic at which almost everyone turned on with LSD. It was very serene: They were like a herd of deer in the forest.

In years to come, it will be possible to have a lunch-hour psychedelic session; in a limited way, that can be done now with DMT, which has a very fast action, lasting perhaps a half hour. It may be that there will also be large reservations, of maybe 30 or 40 square miles, where people will go to have LSD sessions in tranquil privacy.

Playboy: Will the psychedelic experience become universal? Will everyone be turned on?

Leary: Well, not all the time. There will always be some functions that require a narrow form of consciousness. You don't want your airplane pilot flying higher than the plane and having Buddhist revelations in the cockpit. Just as you don't play golf on Times Square, you won't want to take LSD where narrow, symbol-manipulating attention is required. In a sophisticated way, you'll attune the desired level of consciousness to the particular surrounding that will feed and nourish you.

No one will commit his life to any single level of consciousness. Sensible use of the nervous system would suggest that a quarter of our time will be spent in symbolic activities—producing and communicating in conventional, tribal ways. But the fully conscious life schedule will also allow considerable time—perhaps an hour or two a day—devoted to the yoga of the senses, to the enhancement of sensual ecstasies through marijuana and hashish; and one day a week to completely moving outside the sensory and symbolic dimensions into the transcendental realms that are open to you through LSD. This is not science-fiction fantasy. I have lived most of the last six years—until the recent unpleasantness—doing exactly that: taking LSD once a week and smoking marijuana once a day.

Playboy: How will this psychedelic regimen enrich human life?

Leary: It will enable each person to realize that he is not a game-playing robot put on this planet to be given a Social Security number and to be spun on the assembly line of school, college, career, insurance, funeral, goodbye. Through LSD, each human being will be taught to understand that the entire history of evolution is recorded inside his body; the challenge of the complete human life will be for each person to recapitulate and experientially explore every aspect and vicissitude of this ancient and majestic wilderness. Each person will become his own Buddha, his own Einstein, his own Galileo. Instead of relying on canned, static, dead knowledge passed on from other symbol producers, he will be using his span of 80 or so years on this planet to live out every possibility of the human, prehuman and even subhuman adventure. As more respect and time are diverted to these explorations, he will be less hung up on trivial, external pastimes. And this may be the natural solution to the problem of leisure. When all of the heavy work and mental drudgery are taken over by machines, what are we going to do with ourselves—build even bigger machines? The obvious and only answer to this peculiar dilemma is that man is going to have to explore the infinity of inner space, to discover the terror and ecstasy that lie within us all.

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