

PSYCHEDELIC EXPERIENCES ASSOCIATED WITH A NOVEL HYPNOTIC PROCEDURE, MUTUAL HYPNOSIS¹

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One of the most intriguing aspects of hypnosis has been its ability to produce, in the best Ss, very unusual subjective experiences. In the past decade these phenomena have been largely overlooked, as the emphasis in hypnosis research has been on the development of objective measures of suggestibility (Shor & Orne, 1962; Weitzenhoffer & Hilgard, 1959; 1962; 1963), the nature of hypnotic suggestibility (Hilgard & Tart, 1966), and psychological factors affecting responses to hypnotic suggestion (Hilgard, 1965). In comparing the reports of some of the older hypnotic phenomena, usually termed deep trance phenomena, I was struck by their resemblance to many of the experiences now being reported in conjunction with the use of psychedelic drugs. This resemblance suggested that the combination of hypnotic techniques and psychedelic drugs might be very fruitful.

In the past few years several articles have reported on psychedelic-like experiences occurring with hypnosis (Aaronson, 1964; 1965a; 1965b; 1965c; 1966d; Erickson, 1966; Fogel & Hoffer, 1962b; 1963) and on the use of hypnosis to control or guide drug-induced psychedelic experiences (Fogel & Hoffer, 1962a; Levine & Ludwig, 1965; 1966; Levine, Ludwig, & Lyle, 1963; Ludwig & Levine, 1965). Some indirect evidence further indicating that hypnosis may offer a powerful technique for guiding psychedelic experiences also is suggested by the work of Sjöberg and Hollister (1965), who found that suggesti-

bility was markedly enhanced by LSD-25 and mescaline.

The purpose of the present paper is to present examples of psychedelic phenomena arising with the use of a novel hypnotic technique, "mutual hypnosis," as a further indication of possible relationships between deep hypnotic phenomena and drug-induced psychedelic experiences, with the hope that these relationships will be further explored and lead to greater understanding of both the deep hypnotic and psychedelic experiences.

In 1962 I was interested in the problem of whether the depth of hypnosis an S could reach was a relatively constant factor for a given S or whether it could be substantially increased by more effective hypnotic techniques. Data published since that time generally indicate that Ss have a fixed level of response to hypnotic suggestions that is not greatly altered by further training (Ås, Hilgard, & Weitzenhoffer, 1963; Cooper, Banford, Schubot, & Tart, 1967; Shor, Orne, & O'Connell, 1966), but at the time I carried out this study most hypnotists believed any S's hypnotic abilities could be increased by training. The particular technique I decided to try was based on the idea of *rappor*t, the special relationship supposed to exist between hypnotist and S: I reasoned that if *rappor*t was greatest in deep hypnotic states, a technique which markedly increased *rappor*t would likely increase the depth of hypnosis. The method I decided to try for markedly increasing *rappor*t was to have two Ss simultaneously fill the roles of both hypnotist and hypnotized S, what I will call mutual hypnosis. That is, I would have A hypnotize B, and when B was hypnotized he would (while still hypnotized and *en*

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rapport with A) then hypnotize A: then when A was also hypnotized by B (and *en rapport* with B), A would deepen B's hypnotic state, then B would deepen A's hypnotic state, and so on. Ordinary *rapport* is a one-way relation: the *S* is highly attentive to the hypnotist. This procedure would make it a two-way relation, with each *S* highly attentive to the other. I had never heard of such a hypnotic procedure at the time the experiment was carried out.³

Three experimental sessions were carried out over a period of several months with three fellow graduate students as *Ss*. Some background on the *Ss* will be provided below, as well as a description of a self-report scale of hypnotic depth which was used throughout the sessions. Highlights from the three sessions will then be presented and commented on, followed by a discussion of the mutual hypnosis technique and its effects.

SUBJECTS

Two *Ss* participated in all three experimental sessions. They will be called Anne and Bill. A third *S*, Carol, accidentally participated in the second experimental session, as will be explained below. All *Ss* were graduate students in psychology and in their twenties. Each had done some work as hypnotists, administering Form A, B, or C of the Stanford Hypnotic Susceptibility Scales (Weitzenhoffer & Hilgard, 1949; 1962). This procedure does not require much "skill" in the usual sense in which we think of a hypnotist being skilled, as verbatim reading of the induction and suggestibility items is all that is required for giving the test. None of the *Ss* had done much hypnosis other than this.

Each *S* was unusual in being moderately hypnotizable; although there are few stud-

ies of this, it is a common belief among investigators working with hypnosis that almost all hypnotists are very poor *Ss* themselves (LeCron, 1951; Moss & Rigggen, 1963; Moss, Rigggen, Cayne, & Bishop, 1965). The reason is unknown, but speculation usually runs along the line that the hypnotist's personality is oriented toward managing, control, and directing of others, and regardless of any intellectual understanding he may have of the cooperative nature of hypnosis, he feels emotionally that hypnosis involves submission to the control of another. Thus it was a fortunate coincidence to find *Ss* who had both had some experience as hypnotists and were moderately hypnotizable themselves.

The *Ss* had never had any experience with psychedelic drugs.

SELF-REPORT DEPTH SCALE

If an *S* is asked to scale the degree to which he is hypnotized, under some conditions his estimate is very useful in that: (a) it correlates significantly with the usual suggestibility test criteria of hypnotic depth (Hatfield, 1961; Hilgard & Tart, 1966; LeCron, 1953; O'Connell, 1964, Tart, 1963; 1966c; Tart & Hilgard, 1966); (b) it discriminates between different qualities of experience reported by the *S* (Tart, 1966a; 1966b); and (c) the *Ss* feel they are making meaningful discriminations. Indeed, it will be argued elsewhere that the degree to which an *S* reports feeling hypnotized may be used as the criterion of hypnosis, rather than his suggestibility.⁴

An early form of self-report scale was used in the present study. It was being used concurrently in dissertation research (Tart, 1966c).

The *Ss* were instructed, while hypnotized in the preliminary session, that whenever I asked, "Trance depth?" a number would *instantly* flash into their mind indicating

³Two years later I discovered that Milton H. Erickson (1964) had tried a mutual hypnosis procedure in 1933, but in his study the *Ss* were working under a different experimental set, and no psychedelic phenomena were reported.

⁴Tart, C. *Self-report scales of hypnotic depth*. In preparation.

his or her hypnotic depth at the moment. The following illustrative values were read to the Ss for scaling: "(a) zero is waking; (b) from 1 to 12 is a state in which you feel very relaxed and detached, and your arm can rise up or rotate (automatic motion) if I suggest it; (c) a depth of 20 or greater is required for your hand or any other part of your body to become numb (analgesia); (d) a depth of 25 or more is required for you to dream while in the hypnotic state; (e) a depth of 30 or more is required for you to develop amnesia, your mind is very quiet, and you pay almost no attention to anything besides my voice or things I direct your attention to, and you can see and hear anything I suggest; (f) at a depth of 40 or more your mind is absolutely still and everything I suggest to you is perfectly real, absolutely real, just as real as anything in the world; and (g) a depth of 50 or more is an extremely profound trance, so profound that your mind becomes naturally sluggish or slow." This scale thus extended to the level of trance commonly called "plenary" (Erickson, 1956), seldom encountered in practice. The usual "good" hypnotic S would be, *a priori*, expected to score between 30 and 40.

Because the depth of hypnosis can fluctuate from minute to minute, the Ss were frequently asked for depth reports.

PRELIMINARY TRAINING SESSIONS

The possibility was considered that if Anne and Bill were both hypnotists and Ss there might be no way of bringing the experiments to a halt at a convenient time. Further, since the procedure was altogether novel, complications could arise which I would be unable to deal with as the Ss could be completely *en rapport* with each other but oblivious to me or anyone else. Thus Anne and Bill were each given an individual hypnotic training session with me as the hypnotist, in order to (a) establish *rapport* with me; and (b) implant a post-hypnotic suggestion that this *rapport* would last into the later experimental sessions. Thus I could always intervene in

the later sessions and take control of the situation (theoretically). Also, the role of hypnotist was temporarily transferred to Anne in Bill's training session and *vice versa* to establish initial *rapport* between them.

Anne was hypnotized with a hand lowering procedure (Erickson, 1956) and after several minutes of deepening procedures reported a maximum depth of 35. She responded positively to a suggestion that the room would be visually distorted when she opened her eyes. Bill had her walk around the room while hypnotized, and suggested that she would respond well to him in the later experimental sessions. I had her have a couple of dreams in hypnosis, one about hypnotizing Bill, the other about some topic she wanted but which she didn't have to tell to me or anyone (to encourage a sense of autonomy). She reached a maximum depth here of 39, then was dehypnotized.

Bill's training session was similar. He reported a maximum depth of 40, and was able to experience visual distortion of the room, but could not hallucinate a solid object with his eyes open.

FIRST MUTUAL HYPNOSIS SESSION

Bill induced hypnosis in Anne to begin. He suggested that she concentrate on her breathing, that her eyes would close, that she would eventually see a blue vapor flowing in and out of her nostrils as she breathed, and that she would feel herself falling backwards into hypnosis. This was a radical departure from the standardized induction procedure of the SHSS. The instructions to concentrate on the breathing and see it as a blue vapor are an interesting parallel to some Yoga concentration exercises. Anne reported after the session that she did experience falling back in her chair, over and over again, during this induction, although she did not experience coming back up after each fall: just the falling back part. Anne reported a state of 27 at the end of this 7 minute induction procedure. Bill continued to deepen Anne by counting and various other techniques

until she reached a reported depth of 40 several minutes later.

After the session Anne reported the following experience occurred during this deepening: "...I had a sensation for the first time of actually relinquishing control. I had a most unusual physical sensation of my body disintegrating—with great chunks folding off like thick bark on a tree. I was momentarily threatened, almost resisted, reassured myself, and soon this feeling passed, after which my body was *gone*, and I felt like a *soul* or a big ball of *mind*."

Bill now instructed Anne to hypnotize him. Anne opened her eyes, held up a finger, told Bill to watch it, and hypnotized him with this eye fixation technique. After eye closure, Anne closed her eyes and began talking about how she and Bill were climbing down a manhole together, and that Bill would be deeply hypnotized by the time they reached the bottom. Anne said she was seeing bright, glowing crystals on the walls of the manhole as they descended and Bill said he was seeing them too when Anne questioned him. The bottom of the manhole was reached seven minutes after the start of Anne's induction, and Bill reported a depth of 13. I reminded Anne to hypnotize Bill much more deeply. She went through a hand lowering and then a hand levitation procedure with Bill. It was interesting to see Anne's hand show appropriate minor movements during this, suggesting that a high degree of empathy and *rapport* already existed. Bill reported a depth of 36 at the end of this.

I then told Anne to have Bill deepen her hypnotic state, and to remind him to respond to my suggestions whenever I put my hand on his shoulder and spoke to him. This was to keep up my *rapport* with the Ss.

Bill's eyes kept blinking open and closed as he deepened Anne, but after a few minutes his eyes stayed open and his gaze was fixed and steady, a perfect "hypnotic gaze." He apparently stabilized in his role as hypnotized hypnotist. After about 10 minutes Anne reported a state of

43, and when I asked Bill for his state immediately after he also reported 43.

Anne now began deepening Bill again. Both reported a depth of 47 in a few minutes. Anne deepened Bill by suggesting that he would experience himself lying on a warm beach in the sun and listening to the waves rolling in. At the end of this I suggested to Anne that *she* dream a dream which would lead her into much deeper hypnosis and that she describe the dream aloud to Bill so that he would also go much deeper. Anne described dreaming of the two of them being in a car on the desert, watching the road unwind before them, seeing small lizards run over the sand, then walking along the desert road, feeling hot and sticky but with an overall feeling of pleasantness.

When asked by Anne, Bill indicated he was dreaming the same dream. From later questioning, both Ss were by now completely oblivious to their actual surroundings and totally absorbed in their hallucinatory world(s). An interesting side-light is that the laboratory room became very hot with sun shining on the roof shortly before this, and while both Ss claimed no awareness in a later interview that the lab was hot this stimulus was apparently unconsciously incorporated into their shared dream world(s).

Bill became rather unresponsive at this point. Asked to deepen Anne's hypnotic state he rolled his head about, was silent and unresponsive. I asked his depth and he replied, after a long pause, 25. I then asked Anne to deepen him. Anne was silent for several minutes, and I finally asked her what she was doing. She replied, "Taking Bill down the steps." As she was apparently "hallucinating" that she was deepening Bill I asked her to do it *aloud*, so that Bill would be with her, to which she indignantly replied that Bill *was* with her!⁵

⁵ In postsession interviewing, Bill said he was with Anne in going down the steps. As will be discussed later, both Bill and Anne later felt they had shared many detailed experiences which were not verbalized during the experimental sessions.

So I asked Anne to get Bill's depth report when they were all the way down the steps. There was a silent period of several minutes, then Anne asked Bill for his depth and he replied, "I don't know." I placed my hand on Bill's shoulder and asked him why he couldn't give his depth and he replied that nothing came when he was asked. I suggested that he would give a depth report when I snapped my fingers, and he replied with a report of 57, beyond the deepest level defined in the scale. From his behavioral inertness and depth report he was apparently in a plenary trance state, far deeper than anything he had ever reached before.

Because Anne and Bill were so deep I wondered if they could become behaviorally active without disrupting the hypnotic state, so I suggested (through Anne) that both she and Bill would simulate wakefulness in a minute. On signal they both opened their eyes, sat up, lit cigarettes, talked with me and a couple of observers in the room (one of whom was Carol, who had come into the room about this time), and claimed they were awake. I told them depth reports would indicate their true state when I snapped my fingers, and Anne reported 32 and Bill reported 48. Both Ss in the post-session interview reported that they were quite surprised to hear these depth reports automatically come from themselves. Anne felt she was just about normally awake. Bill felt he was awake but almost "turned off" and relapsed into hypnosis several times. Both Ss showed some psychomotor retardation and a lack of initiative.

After a few minutes of simulated wakefulness I suggested they go back into hypnosis again and cease simulating. Anne reported a depth of 38, Bill a depth of 53 at this time. At my suggestion, Bill dehypnotized Anne by counting backwards, and after Anne was fully awake (eyes open and depth report of zero) she dehypnotized Bill by getting his depth report (48) and counting backwards from that with the suggestion that he would be fully awake when she reached zero. At zero Bill still re-

ported a depth of 12, so Anne counted backwards from 12 to fully rouse him. We then talked about the experiment for a while until the Ss had to go off to other business. The session had lasted a little over an hour.

Several major themes emerged in this first session which reappeared in the later ones. Both Ss began to resent my intervening and suggesting that they do anything in particular. Both Ss also felt they had been much more deeply hypnotized than ever before and, in addition, I and one of the observers felt that Anne was a far more dramatic (and presumably effective) hypnotist than she had ever been before: her voice became "hypnotic," she improvised effective techniques instead of sticking to the SHSS forms, and clearly showed great empathy and *rapprochement* with Bill's reactions. Both Ss were pleased and excited over this mutual hypnosis technique, and wanted to continue working with it, although Bill admitted many months later that he had been ambivalent about further exploration.

SECOND MUTUAL HYPNOSIS SESSION

This session was held about one month later. The entire session was tape recorded. Anne began by hypnotizing Bill with a hand levitation technique followed by several suggestions of various automatic movements of the hands for deepening. Bill reported a depth of 9 at the end of this, a rather slow beginning.

At this point Carol entered the room to observe and Anne mentioned this to Bill, commenting that "Carol is going to come in and sit down in the corner, but it will not bother you and you will not pay any attention to her." The phrasing of this remark is significant in the light of later events.

Anne improvised further deepening analogies (watching clock hands turning, seeing a pendulum swing,⁶ etc.) which she

⁶ I could see rapid eye movements under Bill's closed lids when the vision of the swinging pendulum was suggested to him.

used until a report of 18 was given by Bill. She then suggested that he dissociate and watch himself being hypnotized, watch himself perform various hypnotic phenomena, such as his hand becoming light and floating up. She also suggested he have a dream of becoming more deeply hypnotized, and after 13 minutes Bill gave a depth report of 29. As Anne appeared discouraged at this slow progress I suggested that she tell Bill to think about whatever he wanted to that would help him become more hypnotized, and she suggested this to Bill: "...imagine whatever you feel will make you the most relaxed, the most drowsy, the most hypnotized..." Anne was silent then for five minutes and Bill's depth report at the end of this was 38. I then suggested (through Anne) that Bill begin to hypnotize her. This elicited some sighs, long silences, and a depth report of 43 from Bill. Anne questioned him as to what he was experiencing and found that he had spontaneously regressed and was reliving a pleasant experience that had happened to him two years before. Anne suggested that he come back to the present.

The change that then came over Bill was dramatic. He began mumbling typical induction suggestions about relaxing, but over the course of a few minutes his voice became dramatic and forceful. He suggested that Anne see a diamond in her hand and concentrate on it and then almost immediately suggested that it would disappear and her mind would go blank. Then he very forcefully suggested physical relaxation as he counted her into hypnosis: when he reached 20 his whole manner changed and became relaxed and soothing. Anne reported a depth of 22.

Bill then began talking about a "hallucinatory" journey that he and Anne were on together. His voice was confident, smooth, relaxed, and completely convincing that he was describing actual events that were happening rather than anything "unreal." They were standing on a mountain slope, in front of the entrance to a tunnel. They walked hand-in-hand down this tunnel, with the explicit suggestion by

Bill that they would be going deeper into hypnosis as they walked deeper into the dark tunnel. It was quiet in the tunnel, all outside noises had vanished, and an ineffable feeling of pleasantness and significance pervaded the tunnel. Anne reported a depth of 35 after a few minutes of this, and Bill continued describing their walk down the tunnel.

At this point I noticed that Carol had spontaneously gone into hypnosis and was apparently sharing the hallucinatory journey with Anne and Bill: her eyes were closed and her facial expressions seemed to follow Bill's words. I put my hand on Bill's shoulder (the hypnotically implanted signal to put him *en rapport* with me) and told him that Carol was hypnotized and was coming along too. Bill shook his head no, and Carol reported in the postsession interview that she knew she was rejected then, but she stayed hypnotized and in the tunnel. Bill completely lost conscious touch with me and the laboratory environment for the rest of this session and, as indicated in later interviews, strongly resented my attempts to "intrude" into his and Anne's hypnotic world.

Bill soon suggested that Anne guide him deeper into the tunnel (which was equated in both Ss' minds with the depth of hypnosis as well as possessing total experiential reality for them at the time). Anne reported a depth of 40 at this time, then was silent. After a few minutes I suggested that she continue to take Bill deeper into the tunnel. She began speaking in a dramatically smooth and confident manner about continuing the journey into the tunnel. As with Bill's voice, there was a quality that gave absolute reality to what she was describing. She mentioned faintly hearing music as they went deeper into the tunnel, and wondering if it were angels singing. She frequently suggested that the experience was very peaceful, very relaxing and refreshing. When she asked Bill for his depth, he reported 45.

At this point I wondered if I could suggest a post-hypnotic hallucination that would serve as a behavioral check on the deep hypnotic state indicated by the depth

reports, so I put my hand on each Ss' shoulder and suggested: "Why don't you both continue going down the tunnel together, each going deeper into hypnosis, and I want you each to find some sort of object, like a rock or something, that you can bring back to this laboratory and look at here." Bill reported in the post-session interview that he had not heard this suggestion from me. Anne immediately asked Bill if he had found the diamond (which Bill had suggested Anne hallucinate in the induction) in the tunnel, but Bill sternly replied that anything found in the tunnel *belonged* there and could not be taken away.

I continued to suggest to Anne that she bring back something, perhaps a rock from the mouth of the tunnel, and that it would be good if Bill would bring back something too. Anne wanted to go further into the tunnel and to bring something back, very badly: Bill insisted they could do neither and then forcefully took them out of the tunnel. Anne was very distressed at this, she wanted so much (according to later interview) to see what was at the end of the tunnel, and to bring something back. With his voice extremely forceful and loud, Bill took them both from the tunnel and attempted to dehypnotize Anne. As Bill finished his attempt to dehypnotize Anne I asked her for a depth report. She replied with 25, so I then dehypnotized her. Upon inquiry, Anne told me she was mostly awake now. When I asked her if she had remembered to bring a rock back she unhappily replied no. She then dehypnotized Bill, who was already back to a very light state (depth report of 9), and Carol also awakened by herself about this time.

The immediately ensuing interview brought out a number of important points about the experience.

The tunnel was absolutely real to Anne and Bill (and to Carol), as real as any experience in life. Although it was dark they could "see" its walls in a strange way: Anne said it felt as if she had a "light" coming out from under her eyebrows, and "...it wasn't illuminating anything I was seeing, yet it helped me to know that

things were there without seeing them." Both Ss reported feeling the texture of the rock walls, which ranged from soft and slippery at places where it seemed moss-covered to quite hard where the bare rock was exposed.

A second important quality about the tunnel was that it was clearly Bill's personal property: Anne felt she was there only by virtue of Bill's permission and guidance, and Carol, as discussed below, felt she was trespassing! Bill said that the tunnel had rules of its own, that last time it had been Anne's hole in the ground but this time it was his tunnel and very important and personal to him. Further, Bill felt *he* knew what was at the end of the tunnel that Anne wanted to see so much, but he would not let her (or Carol) see it.

Carol's experience is of great interest. She found herself hypnotized and standing near the mouth of the tunnel at about the time when I asked Bill if she could come along. She felt rejected by him (although her eyes were closed and she did not see him nod his head no), but stayed in the tunnel. She followed Anne and Bill into the tunnel, staying out of "sight" behind them, and feeling like a child following its parents when its parents had forbidden it to come. She also wanted to go all the way to the end, as Anne did. When I suggested that Anne and Bill find something to bring back she found a picture of a (unidentified) person, in a small, wooden frame; whenever Bill told Anne that she couldn't bring anything back the picture would twist in her hand and face away from her. When Bill began forcing Anne back out of the tunnel she ran along ahead of them to avoid being caught, and lost the picture while running.

Bill stated that he knew Carol might be back in the tunnel somewhere, but while he didn't like anyone else in *his* tunnel he deliberately paid no attention to her.

Bill reported he was no longer aware of me after I told him that Carol was along, although he seemed to remain vaguely aware of me as an intruding influence. Anne had resented my voice intruding in the previous mutual hypnosis session.

This time she perceived my voice as a small, tiny voice, far off, like the voice of conscience inside her head, while she was in the tunnel. She felt that this served the function of making me distant and unimportant, and therefore easy to ignore if she did not like what I was saying.

Anne and Carol were intensely curious as to what lay at the end of the tunnel, the end that Bill would not let them reach. This resulted in an interesting aftermath. About a month after this session, Anne was a subject in a group hypnosis test. As she knew what the induction procedure was, she decided to "go" back to the tunnel and explore it as soon as she was hypnotized but before the suggestibility test items were administered. She found herself running along the tunnel, hurrying to reach the end before the test items. At the end of the tunnel she found a cave, blazing with brilliant white light, and occupied by an old man of angelic appearance. The room was filled with music from an unseen source. Anne repeatedly asked him what this experience meant; he ignored her at first, and finally told her, very sternly, that he could not answer her question because Bill was not with her! Anne then found herself back at the group hypnosis testing.

Following this second session, Anne and Bill developed an intense friendship, spending a great deal of time together. They felt extremely close to one another as a result of their shared experience. Anne wanted to continue experimenting with mutual hypnosis, but Bill was very ambivalent about it. It was almost three months before they agreed to try one more session. Bill insisted that neither Carol nor any other observer be present.

THIRD MUTUAL HYPNOSIS SESSION

Neither Anne nor Bill felt like hypnotizing the other to begin the session, so they asked me to hypnotize them both to start. I did so with a very permissive eye fixation technique, stressing relaxation, detachment, and feelings of peace. After 10 minutes of this Anne reported a depth of 31 and Bill of 25. I then suggested that they

each have a dream, one that they would not have to say anything about, but which would take them much deeper. Both were silent for several minutes. Then both of their hypnotic dreams ended within a couple of seconds of each other (they had each kept an index finger raised during the dream and lowered it at the end, according to a prearranged plan). After the session, both reported dreams which had begun quite differently, but each dream ended with the *S* climbing upward on a swaying support, a rope ladder in Bill's case, a golden rope for Anne. I got depth reports of 48 for Bill and 42 for Anne at this moment, and suggested that they "go exploring" together, describing it aloud. I did not know at the time that they both experienced being together in a hallucinatory world at this point, and that they both felt they had each climbed up into this world on a rope ladder or golden rope, so I was surprised at how quickly the *Ss* began talking as if they were seeing similar things.

The *Ss* experienced themselves as standing together in a place that they described as a "heaven" of some sort. Their conversation sounded like a continuous description of a drug-induced psychedelic experience. The *Ss* expressed wonderment at the beauty surrounding them. Almost immediately Bill instructed Anne to appreciate what was around them but not to look too closely, not to interfere, to let things change as they would. Bill's instructions to Anne to not grasp at the phenomena, to accept them without trying to possess them, are remarkably parallel to the sorts of instructions given in psychedelic "trip manuals" which came into print years later, such as Leary, Metzner, and Alpert's (1964), and are now widely disseminated as psychedelic lore. There were elaborations of these instructions later in the session.

The first thing the *Ss* remarked about in this heaven world was the water in front of them: it was like champagne and had beautiful, huge bubbles in it. They swam in it together and found it to be remark-

ably buoyant and "bouncy," as well as tasting delicious.

Then Anne heard a distant voice calling to Bill, a voice from an "inhabitant of up there." Bill told her to ignore the voice, and reminded her not to grasp at anything, to simply let events flow as they would. Anne then asked Bill if he had gotten here on a golden rope as she had, but Bill told her to not worry about how they had gotten here but just *be* there. As with the tunnel in the previous session, this place is clearly felt by Bill to be *his*: he didn't want anyone else to know about how to get to it, and he knew what the rules of the place were and insisted that Anne obey them.

The Ss then wandered around looking at beautiful, translucent, glowing, multicolored rocks on the ground for a while. Then Bill suddenly announced that it was time for them to go.

Although asked about it at length in the postsession interview, Bill could not (or would not) explain why he suddenly *knew* it was time for them to leave. Anne was not ready to go, and, as in the previous session, Bill forced her to. I attempted to contact Bill at this point, but he did not respond to me and in the postsession interview claimed he had not heard me at all. Anne stalled, saying it looked as if it were going to rain and they should stay to see if the rain were like champagne. Bill suggested it would rain, all right, but that it would *thunder*⁷ and be *cold*, so when this rain occurred it was very unpleasant. Bill counted back from 50 with instructions that this would dehypnotize Anne.

When Bill reached a count of one I asked each S for a depth report. Anne reported 10, Bill reported 20, so I spent a couple of minutes rousing them to full wakefulness.

⁷ At about this time a jet plane flew over and shook the building. Both Ss denied consciously hearing any plane in the postsession interview: Anne heard thunder in the place where she was. Bill heard neither the thunder nor the plane: he felt he had created the thunder to frighten Anne and get her out of there, but that there was no need for him to hear the thunder or be bothered by it.

The interview clarified a number of things about the experience. As with the tunnel in the previous session, the place at which they felt they were, possessed complete experiential reality. It was different, however, in being obviously "unworldly," much more so than the tunnel. Anne had wondered during the session if it were "God's house," and Bill agreed afterward that it was heaven, but it wasn't the heaven of the Christians, it was the heaven of the Greeks, it was a heaven without finality.

As with the tunnel, Anne felt it to be very much Bill's "possession." Bill was the one who knew how they had gotten there, what the rules of the place were, and how to get back, so Anne didn't think it would be a good idea to insist on staying or doing anything Bill didn't approve of, much more so than in the tunnel of the second session.

The quality of the place they were in was difficult for the Ss to describe. When they first "opened their eyes" and looked about things were "gray," yet it was not an obscuring grayness, and there were many vivid colors and glowing lights. Ordinary concepts of space seemed poorly applicable, for sometimes things were definitely "nearer and further," but at other times the concept of spatial distance between the perceiver and the perceived simply did not fit the experience. The setting was consistently described as beautiful by both Ss, except for the rain. The rain was simply a warm rain falling on his skin to Bill, but to Anne it came with the thunder that frightened her away. Instead of a delightful rain like champagne that she expected, Anne found the rain as cold as ice, freezing and frightening her. The rocks referred to were more like translucent crystals, not tactually hard, and filled with glowing, pulsing colors.

I asked the Ss about their perceived bodies during the experience and found that they were curiously disembodied much of the time. They mentioned having heads or faces but no bodies at times, and Anne reported that they walked *through* each other sometimes. When Bill com-

manded Anne to give him her hand so he could lead her back, Anne reported that she had to "crawl back into my body, sort of. It was almost as if we were moving around with just heads. When Bill said give him my hand, I had to kind of conjure up a hand."

It also came out in conversations some weeks later that this passing through each other was also accompanied by a sense of merging identities, of a partial blending of themselves quite beyond the degree of contact human beings expect to share with others.

Anne asked Bill about the voice that had been calling him early in the session. Bill replied that he purposely ignored it, which had disappointed Anne, as she was sure it was the voice of someone who "lived up there" trying to contact them.

This was the last experiment with mutual hypnosis for Anne and Bill. Anne was ambivalent about the experiences, but would have tried more. Bill was strongly opposed to any further exploration and, like one of Erickson's (1964) Ss, lost his interest in hypnosis a few months afterward.

DISCUSSION

This section will discuss three main topics. First, the question of how the procedure affected the hypnotizability of the Ss and their functioning as hypnotists; second, the psychedelic qualities of this experience; and third, some possible dangers of this mutual hypnosis procedure.

HYPNOTIZABILITY

I had hoped to administer some of the more difficult suggestibility test items from the SHSS to the Ss at the end of the later mutual hypnosis sessions, but they acquired a dynamic of their own each time, with the Ss terminating their own hypnotic states, which precluded this. I did attempt to have the Ss give themselves the post-hypnotic suggestion for a positive visual hallucination (bringing back the rock), but this was not accepted. Indeed, my de-

sire to produce "objective" suggestibility phenomena made me rather insensitive to the dynamics of the situation at times.

In terms of their self-reports of hypnotic depth, both Ss reached much deeper levels than ever before. My clinical impression and that of another observer supports this: the Ss achieved a much deeper level of hypnotic experience than they had ever shown previously. In addition, Anne has continued experimenting with hypnosis, both self-induced and induced by others for several years and reports that she is far more hypnotizable than she was before these mutual hypnosis sessions.

Thus, although this is a limited case study, it certainly suggests that hypnotizability may be dramatically increased by this mutual hypnosis technique, and further research is warranted along this line.

With respect to their functioning as hypnotists, both Ss changed. Bill was a fairly forceful and dynamic person before this experiment, but his performance as a hypnotist definitely became more dramatic and confident. The change in Anne was even more striking: she dropped the relatively bland style of the SHSS procedures and became confident, inventive, and dramatic. When both Ss gave hypnotic suggestions their voice quality possessed such *reality* that one could hardly doubt that the suggestion would work.

Whether the increase in hypnotizability and more effective functioning as hypnotists resulted only from an increase in *rappor*t is unknown. Certainly the two Ss showed a great sensitivity and empathy to the other's experience (but not necessarily an agreement!). Subsequent conversations revealed that the Ss felt so much *rappor*t with each other that it seemed telepathic, although there was no objective evidence to support the idea of telepathic contact here.

PSYCHEDELIC CHARACTERISTICS

A variety of experiences reported by the Ss are similar to those frequently reported in conjunction with drug-induced psychedelic experiences (Cohen, 1965; de Ropp,

1957; Masters & Houston, 1966; Solomon, 1964). These included marked perceptual changes, changes in self-concept and body image, feelings of greatly enhanced empathy and paranormal communication, and a sense of immediate significance to the experiences.

The perceptual changes were not changes in perception of the external world but rather changes in the quality of internal imagery. *Imagery*, however, is too mild a word for the Ss' experiences, as it connotes something less intense than perception of external qualities, less "real," yet for the Ss their internal perceptions were in no way less real or less vivid than their ordinary sensory perceptions. They were also much more vivid and real than their usual imagery. Further, the "sensory" qualities of the internal imagery were often *more* vivid than ordinary sense perceptions: thus Anne talked about colored light glowing as if it were alive. This sort of sensory enhancement is almost always reported from psychedelic experiences. More difficult to convey, but just as real to the Ss, were times in which they "sensed" things in their internal environments but in a way which could not be equated with any usual sensory modalities: thus the Ss would talk about "seeing" things in their shared world but indicate to me that they were simply using an analogy with vision because they could not find words for the actual experience.

Changes in self concept and body image were usually mixed together. The Ss at times perceived themselves as bodiless, or possessing just parts of a body. They also felt there were changes in psychological functioning over and above the alterations in body image. An example of this would be the use of modes of communication between themselves that they did not know they possessed. The alteration that most impressed (and later frightened) the Ss, however, was the feeling of *merging* with each other at times, especially in the final mutual hypnosis session. This seemed like a partial fusion of identities, a partial loss of the distinction between I and Thou.

This was felt to be good at the time, but later the Ss perceived this as a threat to their individual autonomy.

Several times during the sessions the Ss said nothing for a time, but when I questioned them replied that they were communicating, so there was a feeling at the time of the experience that paranormal communication of some sort was going on. Even more striking material regarding the Ss' feelings about this heightened empathy and communication was obtained a couple of months after the final session when the tapes of the sessions had been transcribed. Anne and Bill read the transcripts over and were both shocked. They had been talking about their experiences to each other for some time, and found they had been discussing details of the experiences they had shared for which there were no verbal stimuli on the tapes, i.e., they felt they may have been communicating telepathically or that they had actually been "in" the nonworldly locales they had experienced. This was frightening to both Ss, for what had seemed a lovely shared *fantasy* now threatened to be something *real*. This feeling of the Ss does not constitute any sort of proof for genuine telepathic interaction, of course, for there were no independent records of the details of the Ss' experiences made before they had an opportunity to talk with each other, nor any records of their discussions in the intervals in which they spent time together between sessions. The subjects also were not sophisticated as to the possibilities of interpretation of minimal and symbolic cues by hypnotic subjects, which has been reported to be much more subtle and accurate in the hypnotic than in the normal waking state (Erickson and Kubie, 1939). The Ss did feel strongly that there was telepathic interaction and their reaction to it was one of the most impressive aspects of the experience.

The final psychedelic quality of the experiences to be noted was the feeling of *immediate significance* that most of the experiences had for the Ss, i.e., the experience was self-validating, it did not need to be

checked against some other reference system because it was significant in and of itself.

In the broad sense of the term, these experiences were "hypnotic dreams," dream-like experiences induced under hypnosis. However, they were not at all like the usual hypnotic dream in quality, intensity, or after-effects (Moss, 1967; Tart, 1965).

POSSIBLE DANGERS

Because of the intensity of the phenomena produced with this mutual hypnosis procedure, it could be dangerous in some cases and caution should be taken in future experimentation.

The Ss used in this study were quite mature persons. If this procedure were to be used with psychologically unstable persons and experiences of comparable intensity were obtained, they could be quite unsettling to the S(s), in the same way that an LSD-25 experience is psychologically disturbing to unprepared or immature persons. I have heard indirectly of two college students who tried mutual hypnosis on each other after hearing one of the present Ss mention something about it at a social function. One of the boys was not very stable to begin with and was unable to be fully dehypnotized after the session until professional help was called in.

A complication and possible danger in the present study was introduced in conjunction with my taking a "master of ceremonies" role. I attempted to maintain ultimate hypnotic control of both Ss, both as a precautionary measure and to direct them toward the planned suggestibility testing. This resulted in my being resented by both Ss and losing this control with Bill. It is possible that with highly stable and mature Ss this external control might not be needed and the experimenter could act merely as an observer, but it would seem necessary to retain the "master of ceremonies" hypnotist until much more is known about mutual hypnosis. As profound as the experience was for the Ss, both felt that it had not reached its limit, yet experimental control had already been lost.

A final possible danger to be mentioned is that the "forced" intimacy produced by this technique may be unsettling. The Ss in the present study felt they had become quite close to each other quite suddenly as a result of their shared experiences, although they were able to handle these feelings. Our culture does not prepare people for sudden, intense intimacy. I know of a roughly comparable case of two married couples who took LSD-25 together: each experienced a feeling of an intense merging of identities with the three others. Because of the sudden and unexpected intensity of these feelings the couples had a great deal of difficulty in their emotional relationships to each other for several months afterwards, all centered around feelings that they had seen too much of each other's real selves, more than their previous relationship had prepared them to handle comfortably.

Further explorations of the potentialities of this mutual hypnosis technique should bear these possible psychological dangers in mind. Until more is understood of the phenomena I would recommend that Ss for such experimentation be selected as carefully and the same experimental safeguards for the Ss' welfare be applied as one would use in administering LSD-25 to Ss.

CONCLUSIONS

Although this report is based on only two Ss, the results with them were dramatic enough to warrant considerable research on mutual hypnosis. The technique seems very powerful: it might offer a way to produce psychedelic experiences in the laboratory without the use of drugs and with more flexibility and control than is possible with drugs. As a way of exploring inner fantasy worlds it seems more potent than psychosynthesis techniques (Assagioli, 1965) or the ordinary hypnotic dream. And the possibilities of substantially increasing hypnotizability in Ss who are moderately responsive are worth looking into.

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