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EDITORIALS

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BOOTLEGGED ECSTASY

For several years, quietly and without publicity, several scientists have been studying the behavioral pharmacology of lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD-25), and lately psilocybin, on experimental animals and human subjects. The psychotic effects of these drugs have some but not complete similarity to the schizophrenic psychoses, which has resulted in their classification as psychomimetics. Yet the study of their effects has not given a clue to the etiology or therapy of the naturally appearing psychoses, although a wealth of information regarding abnormal mental states has accrued.

We are now confronted with two untoward by-products which have no relation to legitimate scientific endeavors. The first is the widespread use of these drugs by irresponsible lay persons for their "kick" effect, for the gratification derived from vivid hallucinatory experience, and the pleasure of belonging to a "superior" social group which transcends the mundane existence of ordinary people. The second is the experimentation with the drug by professional persons on subjects, for the avowed purpose of treating a wide variety of psychiatric conditions, but using uncontrolled, unscientific methods. In fact, these professionals are widely known to participate in drug ingestion, rendering their conclusions biased by their own ecstasy. At one time it was impossible to find an investigator willing to work with LSD-25 who was not himself an "addict."

Without further considering the fringe psychologists who have attempted to create a cult of drug users in the Boston area, there are many psychiatrists who have experimented with the psychomimetic drugs as adjunctive agents in psychotherapy to further "uncovering therapy," and there are others who believe that normal as well as abnormal minds may be benefited by the use of the drugs alone. From experimental subjects there are increasing numbers of reports indicating that temporary or even permanent harm may be induced, despite apparently careful pretherapeutic screening of latent psychoses and careful precautions during the artificial psychosis. Indeed, even the therapeutic results which are considered beneficial are open to question or interpretation because of the many contaminating variables not sufficiently controlled.

In this issue of THE JOURNAL (p 758) Drs. Cole and Katz have performed a service by bringing these facts to the attention of the medical profession. This needs to be done repeatedly, as the

editorial in the *Archives of General Psychiatry*¹ proves, for it brought out a wave of vilification on the "nonbelievers" of the drug from a variety of lay people who have enjoyed the ecstasy from its use.

The psychotomimetics are being "bootlegged," and as drugs now under scientific investigation they are being misused. Every effort should be made by the medical professional to block the use of the psychotomimetics except under experimentally controlled conditions, in view of the fact that the Food and Drug Administration has failed in its "policing" functions. The drugs are indeed dangerous even when used under the best of precautions and conditions.

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1. Grinker, R. R., Sr.: Lysergic Acid Diethylamide, *Arch Gen Psychiat* 8:425 (May) 1963.

PUBIC APOCRINE GLANDS AND ODOR

The adult axilla has an acrid, pungent odor which is peculiar to and distinctive of the human animal. This unique fragrance can be traced to the apocrine sweat glands, which have all but disappeared in the human, surviving only in a few limited areas such as the axilla, genitoinguinal region and the nipple. Although the apocrine gland is not a scent gland in the usual sense, its sweat becomes odorous by the decomposing action of resident skin bacteria, and only by gram-positive ones at that. No value can be attached to the odor, or for that matter to the function of the glands themselves, which indeed have been entirely supplanted by the exocrine sweat glands.

Possibly for reasons of delicacy, no one seems to have asked whether the pubic area, rich in apocrine glands, possesses the characteristic bouquet of the axilla. In fact, other than ascertaining the presence of such glands in the pubis, no studies have been made. The occurrence of apocrine-gland disease, such as hidradenitis suppurativa, in this region is adequate clinical testimony of their existence. Kligman and Shehadeh smelled an interesting problem here and started on the odor trail. Their investigation is reported in the March issue of the *Archives of Dermatology*.

Initial instrumentation consisted of the human nose, scanning the scent of the pubic area of healthy adult males. The peculiar apocrine-type odor was absent. It was thought that possibly the