

ASSESSMENT OF LSD

To the Editor: I found the article by Dr. Louria on LSD (Volume 278, No. 8) extremely interesting and important. I have, on several occasions, attempted to persuade intelligent laymen not to take this potentially very dangerous drug. This review will help me on similar occasions in the future.

Although I agree with Dr. Louria's editorial comments, I do not consider them in a scientific article. The second-to-last paragraph is unwarranted:

Even more important, the widespread use of LSD, or similar drugs waiting in the psychedelic wings, could lead to a whole generation of psychedelic dropouts, incapable of and uninterested in addressing themselves to the important sociologic problems that challenge our times. If this happened, the very structure of this democratic society would be threatened.

This statement, although it may be true, is opinion rather than fact, and should appear on the editorial page of the *Journal* rather than in a scientific article. It also makes it useless to show this article to LSD-prone persons. This type of polemic language is precisely the reason many of these people distrust established social institutions (such as organized medicine), and encourages rather than discourages their use of the drug.

I am surprised that the editors of the *Journal* would allow the phraseology of the last four paragraphs of Dr. Louria's article to be printed unchanged. It is particularly interesting to see, under the section entitled "Chromosomal Changes," such phrases as "facile arguments about individual freedom," "trumpeting the alleged ecstasies," "psychedelic missionaries"

and "inveigle young people into joining the hallucinogenic drug movement."

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