



Manifesting Minds: A Review of Psychedelics in Science, Medicine, Sex, and Spirituality

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Manifesting Minds, an ode to all things psychedelic, is one of those books that is guaranteed to shake up the worldview of even the most jaded and well read.

People can expect to have their minds blown, their consciousness raised, and their repertoire of cocktail party salvos increase tenfold by reading this provocative and professionally packaged anthology.

The Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies (MAPS) was founded in 1986 as a nonprofit organization “with a mission to develop medical, legal, and cultural contexts for people to benefit from the careful use of psychedelics.” MAPS publishes a quarterly bulletin, and *Manifesting Minds*, edited by founder and director, Rick Doblin, and director of communications and marketing, Brad Burge, is a compilation of essays, studies, and articles from special-theme editions.

The influence of the psychedelic Ayahuasca on the movie *Avatar*, an interview with Aldous Huxley, and an article on the relationship between extreme sports and psychedelics are a few highlights of the half dozen highly readable articles in the first section, “Arts and Creativity.” Section two, “Coming of Age,” includes some of what are arguably the most controversial articles in the book: the use of psychedelics by children and their value as a tool for helping young people in the transition to adulthood. Ram Dass is a notable contributor who shares a short primer on the right use of psychedelics by teenagers.

The sections “Science and Medicine” and “Therapy” include the most serious and socially relevant articles in the book. From the use of treating addiction with Ibogaine to treating PTSD with Ayahuasca and MDMA, the highly compelling therapeutic applications of psychedelics might just inspire the reader to do research or to help these methods find mainstream attention. A no-holds-barred exploration of psychedelics and sexuality is next, and it is explicit, erotic, and very entertaining.

The section on spirituality opens with an especially poignant essay written by two of Timothy Leary’s closest friends about his mind-set and drug use during the final six months of his life. “Sometimes,” they wrote, “well meaning friends would bring drugs to the house and administer them, unaware of the other medication he was taking. Sometimes Leary really didn’t want to do these drugs, but did them so as not to offend his guests. Sometimes he willingly did anything anyone gave him, in order to soar higher. Sometimes what he was given made him gravely ill or seriously overdosed.”

After reading *Manifesting Minds*, even the most straight-laced fan of Nancy Reagan’s “just say no” antidrug campaign may find themselves doing a search for ayahuasca retreats or asking their teenage son if he has access to MDMA—it’s that compelling.

PATTY SUTHERLAND (Spring 2014)

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