



PharmChem

# Newsletter

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This month we have reprinted a Do It Now publication on "street" drugs. We originally intended to publish a similar article, but our friends at Do It Now Foundation have already done an excellent job. Rather than attempt to write another article on this subject we will share this information with our own readers. In our next Newsletter we will discuss the test results on "street" drugs that we have analyzed during a recent two month period.



## GARBAGE: A REPORT ON STREET PSYCHEDELICS

from "DO IT NOW" Publication

If you are a regular user of street psychedelics, or a layman who considers himself well informed on street dope, you may find it hard to believe the contents of this newsletter. You may scoff, and go on making the same stupid mistakes everyone else is making, relying on the local dealers to give you the straight info on what is really going around. You may think that just because this pamphlet is being written on the West Coast in a particular city, that if you are in another place everything is different. Well, brothers and sisters, it's not different, no matter where you are or no matter where your dope is coming from. And if you can take it, here is our factual report which we entitle:

## GARBAGE:

A REPORT ON STREET PSYCHEDELICS

For many years, during the early days of psychedelic experimentation, it is safe to say that with rare exceptions, most of the drugs being sold were pure. Mescaline Sulfate could still be purchased through chemical supply houses by any doctor who wanted to use it for "experimental" purposes, and the lysergic chemicals used to make LSD were not all that closely guarded. In fact, psychedelics were still legal in many states.

The first "bummer" drug we got wind of was "THC". This chemical, which was supposed to be tetrahydrocannabinol, a synthetic product with heavy marijuana effects, actually turned out in virtually every case to be PCP, an animal tranquilizer with many adverse reactions. After many bad trips, people started wising up a little. The first we heard about the PCP substitution was early in 1967, around the time when THC first became a popular topic in the news media. Still, many people didn't catch on, as realistic street level drug education was largely confined to word-of-mouth.

Today, the fact that virtually all of the "THC" going around is actually PCP is still largely unknown by its users. Each new generation of drug experimenters buys this phony THC unwittingly, not knowing that real tetrahydrocannabinol is so expensive to produce that they couldn't even begin to pay for the raw material with their hard-earned \$2, or whatever the drug has been sold for.

## LSD AND THE "ORGANIC" GAME

Let's play a word game. Suppose I tell you that the use of LSD has been going down slightly as of late. Would you say that statement was

- a. True, or
- b. False.

Surprise! The answer is, both are right. Are you a bit skeptical? Let's explain.

Over the years, due to unfavorable publicity, increased search for a milder trip than LSD, and the big Madison Avenue hype that "organics" are better for you, it has become more popular to ingest "mescaline" or "psilocybin" in search of whatever you are searching for.

The trouble is, more and more people are experiencing unfavorable reactions and "bummers" from these "milder" drugs, the same reactions they were trying to avoid by not taking LSD. The reason for this was a mystery to many, which all exploded with the rise in street-drug analysis programs in the U.S., Canada and Europe. As the samples were turned in, it was discovered that virtually all of the "mescaline" and "psilocybin" was actually LSD, or on occasion LSD-PCP combinations. Thus, with the increased demand for "organic" chemicals, the actual ingestion of LSD has in reality skyrocketed.

In our street drug analysis program in Los Angeles, we experienced many personal shocks as the first results were made known. Qualitative analysis through the USC Medical Center proved of course that THC was really always PCP, but to our amazement, we were unable for several months to acquire a genuine sample of real mescaline. PharmChem Laboratories in Palo Alto, as well as the University of the Pacific School of Pharmacy in Stockton, helped a lot in gathering data, proving the point that real mescaline and psilocybin were virtually unobtainable anywhere! Analysis data from the East Coast, Toronto, Amsterdam and other places was compared, and matched our findings exactly. On top of this, we were receiving samples from all over the U.S., as well as older samples which were carefully saved from batches going back as far as four years.

One particular person brought in six samples of "mescaline", carefully frozen, which had been purchased at intervals for the last three years. The results were amazing. One of the older samples contained only STP. The rest contained either LSD only or LSD-PCP combinations. Similar results, with an overwhelming emphasis on weak or badly made LSD only, were produced for older samples of psilocybin.

## CAUSE OF BUMMERS REVEALED

Over the years, the people at Do It Now, as well as the people at most free clinics, drug clinics and drug crisis centers around the country have developed a healthy fear of strychnine poisoning. The fear seemed well-founded without access to actual analysis data. However, as the data poured in, we noticed that with only rare, almost accidental exceptions, no strychnine had been found in samples of psychedelics which had been tested!

The rationale for believing in strychnine poisoning was basically sound. Symptoms of what looked like strychnine poisoning were found in many bummers, and the conclusion seemed obvious. But the lack of evidence of this chemical in analysis data was puzzling. As pointed out soon in "LSD and the Market Place" (University of the Pacific street drugs bulletin), it was found that excessive doses of pure LSD (over 250 micrograms) could in many cases emanate the beginning signs of strychnine poisoning. In addition, we found that impurities and faulty manufacture of the LSD itself could cause these symptoms. Believing that he had gotten strychnine-laced acid, these beginning signs, which are not actually physically dangerous, could then be magnified by the tripper into a full-scale bum trip.

Another interesting fact was the myth that much of the LSD and other psychedelics was cut with speed, which caused understandable "speedy" reactions. These, we found, were due largely to impurities in synthesis and not amphetamine itself. However, although we have not found much speed in psychedelics on the West Coast, there have been some instances of this finding elsewhere. However, the supposition that a "speedy" reaction always indicates amphetamine in the psychedelic is false.

As mentioned earlier, in some cases, findings indicated that PCP-LSD combinations were in use as "mescaline" and occasionally "psilocybin". This, naturally, would increase chances of a bummer. And of course, set and setting are always of paramount importance, as improper surrounding conditions can always induce a bad

reaction despite the actual quality of the psychedelic ingested. Add to this the particular people whose body chemistry and state of mind are not conducive to any sort of hallucinogenic chemical, and this will account for virtually all bad trips.

### THE BLIND TRUST FACTOR

Despite the fact that analysis data is important, it is of no practical value without a realistic way of conveying this information to the drug subculture. In some locations, analysis programs are prohibited by local authorities from conveying their findings to the public, or have no convenient vehicle for reporting these results. The Do It Now Foundation, however, has developed a system through the L.A. Free Press and four area radio stations to reach upwards of one million people a week in the 14-25 age group in Los Angeles County. This weekly scoreboard has been invaluable in helping stop particularly bad batches of street psychedelics within a day after they hit the streets. In addition, analysis data has also given us the needed authority to speak knowingly regarding the danger of barbiturates, amphetamines and opiate drugs when these are found to be impure.

Though this particular program has achieved a great deal of success, it has made us aware of how much users everywhere blindly depend on their street dealers for reliable information on the drugs they are buying. We are in a constant controversy with local dealers regarding who has the most reliable information on what is going around, and we inevitably win because of a combination of long-established community trust in the Do It Now program, and analysis data to back up our claims. However, without analysis our program would only have the credibility of any other ex-user program anywhere else in the country which is to say that we would be believed regarding general drug information, but would run a high risk of being doubted because we had no particular data on a particular batch of a particular psychedelic, which the dealer always claims has come from a "good" source in such-and-such city, and he guarantees it to be the real product.

As the reader may be well aware, the vendors of street drugs, particularly in the psychedelic category, usually sample their product before marketing it to potential users. Without concrete data to the contrary, users consider this reliable information because it comes from a "peer" source. In addition, every user likes to believe that even though many bummers are going around, for some reason this one particular drug from this one particular dealer is going to be genuine. This is largely due to simple blind trust, without consideration of the dealer's sources. (He's a good, reliable friend, why should he lie to me?) This is a fairly sound conclusion on the part of the potential user, but doesn't take into account the fact that these dealers have been usually lied to by their sources, and these sources by their sources, and so on. This chain eventually goes up to the chemists and syndicate people responsible for the drug's manufacture, who have learned to keep their mouths shut regarding the true contents of their fake THC, mescaline and psilocybin.

### THE OLD TASTE TEST

When a drug is manufactured by the chemist, someone somewhere "tastes" it. That is, a small quantity of the drug is ingested to see what kind of trip is produced. If the LSD is well-manufactured, for example, it will usually be sold as LSD. However, if it is excessively mild or produces inferior reactions of some kind, it will usually go out as psilocybin or mescaline, as these drugs are supposed to be milder than LSD. If it is still recognizable as LSD and the market demands "mescaline," for instance, the drug may be cut with PCP until the reaction is sufficiently disguised to resemble what people believe is that particular drug. We would also like to make a note that as many as 90% of dealers have never had real mescaline or psilocybin, though they all think they have.

On the street level, the power of suggestion is tremendous. Experienced users will swear that "mescaline" and "psilocybin" which contains only LSD bore absolutely no resemblance to their LSD experiences. Users of fake THC often swear that the reaction was like a "heavy grass high," even though PCP's reactions are totally unlike marijuana.

We could go on forever, but due to space limitations we must be satisfied for now with covering only the main points. With a little luck, and proper education, we can hope to someday soon overcome the incredible ripoffs, myths, misrepresentations and bummers resulting from unholy chemists and the bad educational efforts of the past.

REMEMBER — Only one batch in a thousand, anywhere, is really mescaline or psilocybin.

REMEMBER — Dealer claims that he knows the chemist and that the chemist guaranteed real psilocybin or mescaline or THC are almost without exception false.

REMEMBER — That acid and PCP are so incredibly cheap to manufacture, and real mescaline, psilocybin and THC are so expensive, that ripoff chemists are not going to lose money just because there is a demand for the latter substances. They don't care what you take—only what you think you're taking.

REMEMBER — That regardless of where a particular drug is supposed to have come from, this is no endorsement of the quality of the drug. Boston, Laguna Beach, Berkeley, New Mexico and Miami have just as big a ripoff problem as anywhere else.

REMEMBER — That "organic" mescaline and psilocybin are just as much a myth as synthetic mescaline and psilocybin. They rarely appear, unless you make them yourself out of the original products.

REMEMBER — Support local efforts to establish drug analysis services, and once you've got them, use them.

Special thanks to Vic Pawlak of the Do It Now Foundation for permission to publish this article. The Do It Now Foundation is a private non-profit drug education organization that publishes an extensive variety of drug education literature, in both English and Spanish. This information is directed primarily to young people. Please write directly to them for details: P.O. Box 5115, Phoenix, Arizona 85010.

PharmChem wants to remind its readers that our Newsletters contain well-researched, factual information about illicit drugs. Send us your name and address if you wish to receive a free subscription. PharmChem also offers an excellent and reasonably priced urine screening service for methadone and drug-free rehabilitation programs. Please write for details.

## *Newsletter*

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1848 Bay Road, Palo Alto, California 94303 • (415) 322-9942