

## Drug War Follies - Skunk Magazine Issue #18

Okay, before you all go out and do something stupid then tell the local police that I was the one told you to do it, let me make something perfectly clear: I'm not gonna write a column telling you to go buy, try, get high and then get busted with LSD. Ain't gonna happen here. Much of what I've seen passed off for LSD in the last several years was really rotten, second rate, or not LSD at all. There only ever were a dozen or so chemists making good acid in the whole world, and the chances of having the angels descend on you if you don't know someone who knows someone are slim and none. If you're meant to get it some day, you will. If you got to go asking for it you probably aren't going to find it. But she'll find you when it's time. That said, I was thinking about LSD recently and then WHAM! Out of the blue someone sends me an August 8, 2004 story from the London newspaper the Mail on Sunday celebrating the life and death of Francis Crick. Crick, who had died 10 days prior to the paper's publication, won a Nobel Prize in Medicine in 1962—along with his co-researchers James Watson and Maurice Wilkins—for the 1953 discovery of the double-helix structure of DNA—the closest we've got to the secret of life.

And he did it, it seems, while under the influence of LSD.

Then in 1993 Kary B. Mullis won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his invention of the polymerase chain reactor, which allows DNA to be replicated in the twinkling of an eye. And Mullis also credits LSD for allowing him to think outside the box.

These are real scientists at the very top of their games thinking better, more clearly, in a more visionary way than most humans. And they're doing it in part because they used LSD.

Here in the US the DEA has LSD on its Schedule 1 list of drugs, where other nefarious substances like iboga, peyote, magic mushrooms and cannabis also reside. Can you imagine? Where on earth would we be without these wonderful, eye-opening, soul-searing, alchemical medicines? There would never have been a peace movement, or a civil rights movement, or a women's rights movement or an environmental movement or any other movement toward decency on this planet if not for these wonderful things. So of course, we ban them and slap you in the big house for 10 or 20 years if you're caught giving them out to people to try to make the world a little better, a little more human-friendly, a tad more wonderful.

And the whole stinking world pretty much goes along with us. With us. the US. The DEA, which isn't even 35-years old—that's not even as old as the Colombian civil war for fuck's sake—and is manned by some of the dumbest, meanest, stupidest humans ever to fall out of a womb, though I have known some decent but misguided agents as well, gets to set this political agenda which suggests that enlightenment is a bad thing and everybody just buys into it.

Well, I don't. Instead, I want to take a moment to say thank you to every chemist who ever put his freedom on the line making LSD. I want to say thank you to every papermaker who ever made good sheets of blotter. I want to say thank you to the hippies who handed it out and thank you to those who suffered and are suffering in jails and prisons because of their involvement with it.

And I want to say a particular thank you to my friend Norman and his wife Ellen, who thirty-five years ago in Sugar Grove, West Virginia sent me out to the cold cellar to their secret stash to grab three hits of windowpane. It was Ellen's birthday—Ellen was a catholic nun who'd left the nunnery to explore the world and her own spirit—and we were going to celebrate with it. But on returning to the house I discovered them gone. A note let me know they'd decided to take a day in town instead and so I ate the three windowpanes and went for a walk in the hollow in which their farm sat. Within half-an-hour the trees started dancing in the wind and the rolling hills began to actually roll. Clouds clustered and decided to rain on me, to refresh me: understanding that the clouds had made a conscious decision to come together to refresh me was a fantastic moment. In an instant I learned—realized—how small we humans are, existing at the largesse of natural forces so much bigger than we. What a wonderful thing to learn. I've never forgotten it except for times when I've been drunk and stupid and full of myself and shit.

LSD taught me a great deal more over the years, but if realizing that I was not the most important part of the universe was the only thing she ever taught me, that still would have been more than most of my teachers have imparted.

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Okay, enough sentimental crap. There's a drug war going on motherfathers and you ain't doing your part to stop it! Which means you're part of the problem. So change already and let's end this thing!

In Morocco, United Nations officials say that the hash-making cannabis crop has been cut by half in the last three years. The only impediment to eliminating the crop altogether, says the UN, is getting the farmers of the Rif mountains to quit as well. Good luck. I've spent a little time in the Rif and those are some crazy mfs. The Jebala tribals, who have inhabited the region since neolithic times, are independent, fearless and have been at odds with the rest of Morocco for centuries. They staged a major revolt as recently as 1958, and there are nearly annual confrontations with Moroccan police over the amount of cannabis they grow. And grow they do, about 100,000 hectares a year, enough to supply most of Europe and much of the former Soviet Union with all their hashish needs.

And they're very insistent about selling it. You head up to the Rif, you better be looking to buy some dope. Last police check point is at Bab Taza, and the police are nice enough to warn you that they are not permitted beyond that point by the Jebala, so they can't protect you. And with the aggressive sellers, you actually need protection. If it wasn't for the hash oil that spilled all over my hands—which I licked off and which gave me a sort of superman ability to drive that day—during a photo shoot with the great Stick E Roken, my car would have been pushed off the mountainside by numerous cars full of Jebala who thought we were Interpol and actively tried ramming us off the road on the way to Ketama.

They make a special treat up there called majoun. According to a fellow at whose home we photographed a dozen types of hashish and where I spilled the hash oil, "We make it by taking all the leaves off the bud while it's on the stalk, and then we put olive oil on our hands and rub

the bud on it. Then we cover it with sugar and barbecue it over a wood fire. You can talk to Allah if you eat majoun.&rdquo;  
I&rsquo;m guessing the UN isn&rsquo;t going to see cannabis growing wiped out in the Rif anytime soon.

Da Bush, da Bush, da Burnin&rsquo; Bush. Up in flames again but not imparting any wisdom at all, da burnin Bush has just asked the US congress for a 31% increase in funding for the utterly failed anti-drug ad campaign that&rsquo;s bespoiled our newspapers, magazines, airwaves and television programming for several years now.

The problem with the campaign, aside from being built on raw lies, is that it&rsquo;s ineffective. A five year study conducted at the behest of the Government Accountability Office for the Office of National Drug Control Policy&mdash;which funds the anti-dope campaign&mdash;was released a couple of months ago, after the White House sat on it for nearly a year and a half. The study concluded that the more 14-16-year olds were exposed to the ads, the more they went out and tried illegal drugs.

So Bush sees it as vital to not only continue with the failed campaign but increase the campaign budget. Which will increase youthful drug experimentation. Makes you wonder if he&rsquo;s got any stock in Mexican cartels or Colombian finishing labs.

It would all be funny if people weren&rsquo;t dying and the prisons weren&rsquo;t full.

## About the Author

Source: <http://petergormanarchive.com>