

The Last Time I Dropped Acid

... LSD sharpens and intensifies all our senses, producing a worldview closer to the objective reality—the wonders of life—than the dull daily experience.

—Swiss Chemist Dr. Albert Hofmann, who synthesized LSD in 1938, on the eve of his 100th birthday (from *Playboy*, February, 2006)

Having come of age in the 1960s and being possessed of an inquisitive mind, it's not unsurprising that I partook of nature's pharmacopoeia—and since, at age 20, I found myself working in a mental hospital and given a key to a cabinet stocked with psychoactive medications, not surprising that I dabbled in mankind's—or, rather, the pharmaceutical industry's—pharmacopoeia as well. By the time I reached my-mid twenties, I had smoked marijuana, hash, and opium, ingested codeine, methamphetamine, Valium, Librium, Seconal, Nembutal, and Quaaludes, eaten mushrooms and peyote buttons, taken MDA, and tripped on LSD in a half-dozen forms—four-way tabs, Blue Cheer, Purple Haze, Owsley, and Mickey Mouse and Alice in Wonderland windowpanes. I had even watched an acquaintance (who swore he had no habit, but who was always in a sweat when it came H-time) shoot up with heroin. I declined his offer to share his needle, but did taste the powder. The only drug I never tried—and it was only because I always seemed to show up just after everyone had powdered their noses—was cocaine.

My experiences with these drugs were uniformly interesting and educational, but as my motive was experimental rather than escapist, I had little interest in continuing their use. And so I stopped, in 1974.

There was an exception, of course. There usually is, isn't there?

No, it wasn't marijuana. While that good drug had markedly improved my taste in music, for some reason smoking it tended to make me dwell on all the things I should have been doing instead of sitting there stoned—washing and



waxing the car, or finishing a term paper, or cleaning out the closet.

No, it wasn't alcohol. I allowed myself to become drunk only once, and of all my drug experiences, that was the most frightening, for I lost control of my emotions. I have been the designated driver ever since.

No, the drug I most liked was LSD. It wasn't because I enjoyed the physical sensations—they were intense and disquieting—but because it completely trashed my ego, allowing myself to look at myself as I *really* was, my vision undistorted by my usual psychic defenses. I found it useful to so analyze my life every few years by taking a quick trip. It was faster, more pleasant, and way less expensive and far more therapeutic than psychotherapy.

But good acid is hard to find, and so I stopped that, too—until November, 1991, when by some chance I came across two tabs.

Now, in November 1991, I was nearly two years post-transition and some four months post-op. It was early in my career as an activist, and as a woman. Internally, I was working on my self-image, and externally, I was processing criticisms of transsexualism by such writers as Paul McHugh (an arrogant and ignorant psychiatrist) and Janice Raymond (an arrogant and ignorant victim feminist). Raymond, channeling her mentor, Mary Daley, had called transsexuals “frankensteinian,” and McHugh's opinion of us

was no better; he thought we mutilate ourselves with surgery. Both of these transogynists are, in fact, despite never having taken the trouble to learn about transsexualism or transsexuals, still unrepentant.

And so I proposed an experiment to a pre-op friend with whom I often talked gender theory—or she proposed the experiment to me, I forget which. We would drop the acid, and while we were in the middle of the trip, we would look at ourselves, naked, in a full-length mirror. We would ahem, peek while peaking. If we were frauds, fakes, creatures of artifice or perversion, “really” men, covert homosexuals, sinners, mockeries or stereotypes of women, if we were mentally ill or unnatural or self-deluding in any way, we would instantly know it; with our egos dismantled by the LSD, we would see ourselves as we really were. We would know, finally and for certain, in the deepest crevices of our minds that still harbored doubts, just who we were.

And so, our pupils dilated, we stood in front of the mirror in our altogether, both with breasts, she with a penis and me without, our eyes unfettered by sociological, psychological, and personal blinders, and *looked* at ourselves. We looked to see whether we were creatures of nature or perversions thereof. We looked to see whether we were right, or our critics. We looked to see whether we were monsters, or whether we were god's beautiful creatures. And through the wide-open doors of perception, we saw the truth.

We were beautiful.

And *that* is the last time I ever dropped acid. *T*

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