

EPS 426
Foundations of Psychedelic Studies
 Fall 2010

Department of Leadership,
 Educational Psychology and Foundations
 Northern Illinois University

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There is a central human experience, which alters all other experiences ... not just an experience among others, but rather the very heart of the human experience. It is the center that gives understanding to the whole. Once found, life is altered because the very root of human identity is deepened.

LSD and the Enlightenment of Zen
 Wilson Van Dusen

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Instructor:

Thomas B. Roberts, Ph.D.

Office hours: before and after class
 in the Honors Program classroom
 and by appointment.

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Specific Objectives:

Psychedelic research may be the field with the greatest gap between the information scholars and scientists have discovered and what the general public knows. This course helps bridge that gap by surveying psychedelics' history from archaeological times to the present and by examining their implications for psychotherapy and mental health, religion, and various academic disciplines and professional interests. Students may select a topic for individual study such as archeology, anthropology, history, psychology, sociology, botany, chemistry, religion, philosophy, one of the arts, literature and language, or implications for professional practices such as health, law, education, and similar fields.

Liberal Education Objectives:

In addition to these specific objectives, this course will help teach you to think critically (that is, to analyze information, evaluate opinions, and use higher level cognitive processes), broaden your intellectual horizons (by exposing you to new ideas from across disciplines, through time, and from different cultures and perspectives), and promote self-awareness, (especially awareness of how your own mind functions).

NOTICES, WARNINGS, AND CAUTIONS

Because this course considers some illegal substances it's prudent to consider the following:

“Psychedelic Warning Label” (A former student labeled this this way.)

Not “privileged” communication. Unlike private, confidential communication with a lawyer, doctor, or clergy, communications in this class are not legally given a status of “privileged,” so if you have something to say about your own psychedelic experiences or those of people you know, you may want to protect the identity of the person you are talking about. As I have spoken openly about my psychedelic experiences, I am likely to talk openly, but this may not be right for you.

From my own experiences and through readings, I have become increasingly respectful of the power of LSD and other psychedelic drugs. Like any powerful thing, they can be destructive or constructive depending on how skillfully they are used. Among other things, they can concentrate your attention on the most vulnerable, most unpleasant parts of your mind. Therefore, psychedelic drugs should be explored only under the guidance of a qualified therapist, one who has extensive psychedelic training. If you need assistance, most mental health professionals, as they are currently mistrained concerning psychedelics, may be of little help; some could even worsen your state. Furthermore, street dosages are of unknown strength and questionable purity. Until the time you can explore your mind using psychedelics drugs of known strength and purity under qualified guidance, within the law, I urge you to limit yourself to studying the literature and working within professional and other organizations for the resumption of legal, scientific, religious, or academic research.

Required books:

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Grof, Stanislav | <i>LSD: Doorway to the Numinous</i> |
| Huxley, Aldous | <i>The Doors of Perception</i> |
| Stevens, Jay | <i>Storming Heaven</i> |
| Walsh & Grob | <i>Higher Wisdom</i> |

Recommended books:

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Grob, Charles | <i>Hallucinogens: A Reader</i> |
| Hayes, Charles | <i>Tripping</i> |
| Roberts, Thomas | <i>Psychedelic Horizons</i> |
| Smith, Huston | <i>Cleansing the Doors of Perception</i> |
| Stolaroff, M. | <i>The Secret Chief Revealed</i> |

And hundreds more, maybe thousands of others.

Required Internet List Subscription:

MAPS Forum. <http://www.maps.org> Click on <Participate> then on <MAPS Online

Forum>.

Recommended Internet List Subscriptions:

These clip and excerpt current periodicals for articles about drug policy. They provide current background information, but aren't primarily about psychedelics.

Electronic Newsletter: <http://www.drugpolicy.org/homepage.cfm> . They also offer several news reports on specific topics, geographical regions, etc.

Drug Sense Newsletter: <http://www.drugsense.org/hurry.htm> . If you are a policy wonk, you can subscribe to daily news and other information through this site too.

Grading: During Finals Week, you will submit a portfolio whose contents are listed in the Finals Week's section of this syllabus.

Academic integrity: Academic integrity is expected of all students. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own work that which he or she has not produced is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense. Students are considered to have plagiarized if they copy the work of another during an examination of turn in a paper or assignment written, in whole or part, by someone else. Students are guilty of plagiarism, intentional or not, if they copy from books, magazines, the Internet, or other sources without identifying and acknowledging them.

Academic misconduct includes reusing work by oneself for another course. If academic misconduct is suspected, the faculty member will follow the "Faculty Guide to Academic misconduct: issued by the University Judicial office. The standard grade for academic misconduct is an F in the course. For details about academic misconduct, go to: <http://www.stuaff.niu.edu/judicial/faculty.htm> .

Current research in-class presentation: Aug. 25th – Sept. 29th. Is any psychedelic research going on today? People always ask this question while we are studying Grof. To keep our class up to date on current research, you will briefly summarize (5-7 minutes) a report on current psychedelic research to the class. The 3 best places to look are: <http://www.maps.org/research/>, www.clinicaltrials.gov, and <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi> Your class handout will become part of your portfolio.

Self-selected book in-class presentation: Oct. 4th-Oct. 27th. Writings on psychedelics are so many, new, and varied that it is impossible to cover them all. To give our class a taste of this diversity, you'll select (with my OK) a book on your own to read for class. In about 12 minutes, you'll summarize and evaluate the book. It can be fiction or nonfiction, popular or scholarly, scientific or humanistic, pro-psychedelics or anti-psychedelics, secular or sacred so long as it has psychedelics as an important theme. Or you might compare two books. You'll reserve a date to tell the class about it. If you want and if the book is long, you may work with one partner and both discuss the same book. Your class handout will become part of your portfolio. A list of the topics your book

review should include is on the last page in this syllabus.

Term Project in-class presentation: Nov. 1nd – Nov. 29th. Work together with a partner or individually if you wish. Have fun and make them interesting and informative. This might be a class activity, creative project, play, TV interview, a comparison of several books, paper on a topic that interests you, term paper about psychedelics for another class (with your other professor's approval), your own research project (no credit for illegal activities), report on a conference you attended. What can you come up with? (Remember: no credit for illegal activities). Check with me to be sure your topic is OK. You'll present your project to the class in a presentation of about 15 to 20 minutes per person — handouts are handy. A handout or summary of your project will become part of your portfolio.

Weekly Internet Field Trips will transport you to some of the many websites which specialize in psychedelics and related topics. From their home pages, explore around the sites and their links for about 10 minutes to see what you can find.

In-class videos: These are not recreational time-fillers, but should be considered as guest lectures to learn from. One of the nice things about this topic is that there are many excellent tapes to learn from and enjoy. You should learn their contents as you would from readings and lectures.

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***Introduction— Themes we will follow through this semester
Religion, Mind, Social-Historical Context***

Aug. 25 – Sept. 29th

Short, 5-7-minute, in-class presentation on current research. Sign-up to reserve a date and/or topic. Make a 1-page handout. The most up-to-date places to look are: www.maps.org/research, www.clinicaltrials.gov, and www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query (probably the world's best source for medical news).

Aug. 23

Introduction to the class
Psychedelic vs. psychoactive
Why not to put LSD in your friend's coffee

Aug. 25

Readings:
Read this syllabus. Any questions?
Morris: Research on Psychedelics Moves Into the Mainstream

Consider the statement on the slip of paper that you received on the first day of class. We'll discuss this today.

- 1) How might such an experience change how a person feels and thinks about himself/herself?
- 2) How might such experiences change society and the world?
- 3) What are the connections between the statement and the Van Dusen statement on page 1 of this syllabus?

In-class, online video: Griffiths TED presentation.

Weekly Internet Field Trip: www.maps.org Click on <Participate> then <MAPS Online Forum> and follow the directions to subscribe.

Explore the site to see what you can find. The MAPS website is a primary source of ideas for projects, books, and one of the richest and most up-to-date sites on news about psychedelics.

The Human Mind and Psychology

Aug. 30

Stanislav Grof is widely regarded as the world's foremost researcher of psychedelics. ... he supervised several thousand clinical and research sessions with psychedelics, considerably more than any other researcher. He has therefore perhaps seen a vaster panoply of human experience than anyone else in history.

**R. Walsh & C. Grob
Higher Wisdom, p. 119**

Reading

Grof: Preface to *LSD: Numinous*

Google: <Stanislav Grof> Explore and read for 20 minutes or more. Be prepared to tell the class what you found/learned.

In-class video: begin *Psychedelic Science*

Sept. 1

Reading:

Grof: *LSD: Numinous* Chapter 1

In-class video: finish *Psychedelic Science*

Recreational Internet Field Trip: www.hofmann.org

Sept. 6, Labor Day, no class.

Sept. 8

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It is assumed that if, as is often said, one traumatic event can shape a life, one therapeutic event can reshape it. Psychedelic therapy has an analogue in Abraham Maslow's idea of the peak experience. The drug taker feels somehow allied with a higher power; he becomes convinced that he is part of a much larger pattern, and the sense of cleaning, release, and joy makes old woes seem trivial.

Grinspoon and Bakalar
Psychedelic Drugs Reconsidered

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Weekly Internet Field Trip: www.heffter.org

Readings: Grof: *LSD...* Chapter 2

In-class video: *begin LSD: Spring Grove Experiment*

Sept. 12

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[T]his substance is an unspecific amplifier of mental processes that brings to the surface various elements from the depth of the unconscious. What we see in the LSD experiences and in various situations surrounding them appears to be basically an exteriorization and magnification of the conflicts intrinsic to human nature and civilization. If approached from this point of view, LSD phenomena are extremely interesting material for a deeper understanding of the mind, the nature of man, and human society.

Stanislav Grof
Realms of the Human Unconscious

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Readings: Grof: *LSD...* Chapter 3

Weekly Internet Field Trip: www.erowid.org

In-class video: *finish LSD: Spring Grove Experiment*

Sept. 15

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In contradistinction to writings on the psychedelics that are occupied with experiences the mind can have, the concern here is with evidence they afford as to what the mind is ... judged both by the quantity of data encompassed and by the explanatory power of the hypotheses that make sense of this data, it is the most formidable evidence psychedelics have thus far produced. The evidence to which we refer is that which has emerged through the work of Stanislav Grof. ... The novelty of Grof's work lies in the precision with which the levels of the mind it brings to view correspond with the levels of selfhood the primordial tradition describes.

Forgotten Truth: The Primordial Tradition
Huston Smith

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Reading: Grof: *LSD ...* Chapter 4, pp. 97-126

Question: Where do we see BPMs I and II in our lives, arts, and history?

Recreational Internet Field Trip: Nichols, Dave. www.maps.org/news-letters/v09n4/ Click on "From Eleusis to PET scans"

Sept. 20

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Deep reverence for life and ecological awareness are among the most frequent consequences of the psychospiritual transformation that accompanies responsible work with non-ordinary states of consciousness. The same has been true for spiritual emergence of a mystical nature that is based on personal experience. It is my belief that a movement in the direction of a fuller awareness of our unconscious minds will vastly increase our chances of planetary survival.

Stanislav Grof
The Holotropic Mind (page 221)

Readings: Grof: *LSD...* Chapter 4, pp. 126-156

Roberts: handout: Sometimes It's Lucky ... and *Snow White* Grof's ...

Weekly Internet Field Trip: <http://www.birthpsychology.com/journal/>

Question: Where do we see BPMs III and IV in our lives, arts, and history?

In-class lecture: A Grofian interpretation of Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*

Recommended video: Disney's *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*

Sept. 22

Student BPM papers. Show your ability to use Grof's BPMs by analyzing something, - - an event in your life, a movie or TV show, historical event, news stories, your dreams, literature, music, etc

Sept. 27

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Ah, yes. I see what you have done. You have stripped away ME!
This is a touch of death—a preparation for the big one when No Me will be permanent.

Unnamed patient to Dr. Sidney Cohen

Readings: Grof: *LSD...*, Chapter 5, pp. 157-181

Weekly Internet Field Trip: <http://www.atpweb.org/>

Sept. 29

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The greatest impact this acid trip had on me was to entirely alter my view of death. This has affected the way I live. ... If I had been asked to draw a picture of death I would have drawn a

black box; that is all. Now I have tried drawing pictures of death in which I am fusing into the horizon, feeling ecstasy. My sense was, and is, that the strong beam of light from the setting sun on the ocean horizon will pull me into its orange warmth, and I will sink into a "beyond." *Emerging Woman*, Natalie Rogers

Readings: Grof: *LSD ...* Chapter 5, pages 181-217

Recreational Internet Field Trip: <http://teleomorph.com/category/psilocybin/>

In-class video: Pam Sakuda's session

Oct. 4 – Oct. 27. Self-selected book review. See the last 2 pages of this syllabus for instructions. Provide a 1 or 2 page handout for the class. This review will become part of your portfolio.

Oct. 4

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The most important obligation of any science is that its descriptive and theoretical language embrace all the phenomena of its subject matter; the data from [altered states of consciousness] cannot be ignored if we are to have a comprehensive psychology

Charles T. Tart

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Weekly Internet Field Trip: www.sunrisedancer.com/radicalreader/

Readings: Grof: *LSD...*, Chapter 6 and Epilogue

In-class video: begin *Interview with Stan Grof on Transpersonal Psychology*

Possible speaker: Bruce Sewick

Oct. 6

Fortunately, after a successful psychedelic experience, you never go back to your previous state of consciousness—that's the whole point of taking psychedelics. If you don't integrate the higher levels of consciousness into your daily life, then the trip has been irrelevant. ... If a psychedelic doesn't result in your becoming a human being who is more human, then psychedelics are meaningless and don't make a difference. I have never known anyone who had a profound transcendental experience who wasn't significantly changed in his or her daily life by that experience.

Gary Fisher, "Treating the Untreatable"
Higher Wisdom, p. 112

Test: Bone crushing BPM II, high struggle BPM III!

In-class video: complete *Interview with Stan Grof*

Recreational Internet Field Trip: www.gaiamedia.org Scroll down to locate items in the English language. Some items from the left navigation bar will link to English language items too.

Thoughtful Perspectives

Oct. 11

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In recent years the West has begun to appreciate the fact that tribal societies can teach us much about the natural world from which we are so often alienated. It seems we may also have much to learn about the supernatural world, from which we are likewise alienated. Bearing in mind that humans have an innate need to experience altered states of consciousness, to ignore or repress our own natures in this way is to neglect our own capacities. What anthropology can do, by describing other cultures in which scientific and poetic approaches to truth are part of a holistic vision, is to remind us of the lack of harmony in the elements of our own second nature. It can indicate ways in which we may reach a better understanding of the importance of altered states of consciousness in both our collective and our personal lives.

Richard
Rudgley

Essential Substances in Society

Readings: Walsh & Grob: *Higher Wisdom*, pp. xi-23, 241-255

In-class video: Interview with Jim Fadiman

Recreational: <http://www.csp.org/communities/docs/vaughan-balance.html>

“A Question of Balance: Health and Pathology in New Religious Movements.”

Oct. 13

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It should not be necessary to supply any more proof that psychedelic drugs produce experiences that those who undergo them regard as religious in the fullest sense.

Psychedelic Drugs Reconsidered
Lester Grinspoon & James Bakalar

Weekly Internet Field Trip: www.csp.org/chrestomathy

Walsh & Grob: *Higher Wisdom*, pp. 25-67

Recreational Internet Field Trip: Wasson: Seeking the Divine Mushroom. Find at www.druglibrary.org/schaffer/lsd/ Click “History of Psychedelic Rediscovery.”

Oct. 18

There are a lot of people for whom psychedelics have been really beneficial. But I wouldn't recommend it to everyone. Some people are just not ready but society would benefit from letting people who are ready for psychedelics have legal access to them.

Kary Mullis

Readings: Walsh & Grob: *Higher Wisdom*, pp. 69-144

Question: Who has the knowledge, right, power, or expertise to decide religious issues having to do with the entheogenic uses of psychedelics?

Recreational Internet Field Trip: <http://www.beckleyfoundation.org/>

Oct. 20

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At the point in his evolutionary progress where we first call him "Man" beyond a doubt—*Homo sapiens sapiens*—and when he came to know, also beyond a doubt, what awe and reverence were, he clearly felt that Soma was conferring on him mysterious sensations and powers, which seemed to him more than normal: at that point Religion was born, Religion pure and simple, free of Theology, free of Dogmatics, expressing itself in awe and reverence and in lowered voices, mostly at night, when people would gather together to consume the Sacred Element. The first entheogenic experience could have been the first, and an authentic, perhaps the only authentic miracle. This was the beginning of the Age of Entheogens, long, long ago.

Wasson et al, *Persephone's Quest*

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Weekly Internet Field Trip: Go my faculty website listed on page 1 of this syllabus, and click on <Entheogens—Sacramentals or Sacrilege?>

Readings: Walsh & Grob: *Higher Wisdom*, pp. 147-188

In-class video: R. Gordon Wasson, *Mushroom Man*

Oct. 25

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The experiment was powerful for me, and it left a permanent mark on my experienced worldview. (I say "experienced worldview" to distinguish it from what I think and believe the world is like.) For as long as I can remember I have believed in God, and I have experienced his presence both within the world and when the world was transcendently eclipsed. But until the Good Friday Experiment, I had had no direct personal encounter with God of the sort *bhakti yogis*, Pentecostals, and born-again Christians describe. The Good Friday Experiment changed that, presumably because the service focused on God as incarnate in Christ.

Cleansing the Doors of Perception
Huston Smith

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Readings: Walsh & Grob: *Higher Wisdom*, pp. 191-239

In-class video: *Jeffrey Mishlove Interviews Huston Smith*

Weekly Internet Field Trip: www.druglibrary.org/schaffer/lsd/ (a rich source)

Oct. 27

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**That's the essence of science:
Ask the impertinent question, and you
are on your way to pertinent science.**

The Ascent of Man
Jacob Bronowski

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Hand-in, take-home essay test: Select a topic, discipline, or area of interest and consider psychedelics' implications for it. Can you invent some "impertinent questions" for the topic you select? Present your paper to the class and lead a brief discussion of it.

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**The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: ...
The kingdom of God is within you.**

Luke XVII, 20-21

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Nov. 1nd-Nov. 29th: In-class partners or individual project presentations.
Sign up to reserve a date and/or topic.

*The 60s— Social, Political, Historical,
Scientific and Intellectual Context*

Nov. 1

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**Time, events, or the unaided individual action of the mind will
sometimes undermine or destroy an opinion without any outward
sign of change. ... No conspiracy has been formed to make war on
it, but its followers one by one noiselessly secede. As its opponents
remain mute or only interchange their thoughts by stealth, they are
themselves unaware for a long time that a great revolution has
actually been effected.**

Alexis de Tocqueville

Weekly Internet Field Trip:

<http://www.normal-design.com/bicycle-ride.html> (highly enjoyable)

Reading: *Storming Heaven*, pages vii-12, 23-43. Optional: 13-22

Video: *Hofmann's Potion*

Nov. 3

If the doors of perception were cleansed every thing would
appear to man as it is, infinite.

William Blake

Reading: Huxley *The Doors of Perception*, all

Recommended Internet Field Trip: Huxley: Drugs that Shape Men's Minds

<http://www.csp.org/practices/entheogens/docs/huxley-drugs.html>

Nov. 8

**It was fun, fun, fun. Where else could a red-blooded
American lie, kill, cheat, and rape with the sanction
of the all-highest?**

**George Hunter White, US Narcotics Officer
Acid Dreams, page 70C**

Recommended Internet Field Trip: www.bonkersinstitute.org

Reading: *Storming Heaven*, pages 44-87

In-class video: *Mind Control Murder*, Frank Larson

Nov. 10

Turn on. Tune in. Drop out.

Timothy Leary

Reading: *Storming Heaven*, pages 91-135

Weekly Internet Field Trip: www.usdoj.gov/dea Search for a topic related to
this class.

In-class video: *1/3 Berkeley in the 60s*

Nov. 15

Last Friday, April 16, 1943, I was forced to interrupt my work in the laboratory in the middle of the afternoon and proceed home, being affected by a remarkable restlessness, combined with a slight dizziness. At home I lay down and sank into a not unpleasant intoxicated condition, characterized by an extremely stimulated imagination. In a dreamlike state, with eyes closed (I found the daylight to be unpleasantly glaring), I perceived an uninterrupted stream of fantastic pictures, extraordinary shapes with intense, kaleidoscopic play of colors. After some two hours this condition faded away.

LSD - My Problem Child

Albert Hofmann

Reading: *Storming Heaven*, pages 136-184

In-class video: 1/3 *Berkeley in the 60s*

Recreational Internet Field Trip: Search Google for <Bicycle Day>

[http://www.cedu.niu.edu/lepf/edpsych/faculty/roberts/Why-Is-Bicycle-Day-](http://www.cedu.niu.edu/lepf/edpsych/faculty/roberts/Why-Is-Bicycle-Day-April-19th.doc)

[April-19th.doc](#)

Nov.17

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Some years ago I myself made some observations on this aspect of nitrous oxide intoxication, and reported them in print. One conclusion was forced upon my mind at that time, and my impression of its truth has ever since remained unshaken. It is our normal waking consciousness, rational consciousness as we call it, is but one special type of consciousness, whilst all about it, parted from it by the filmiest of screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness entirely different. We may go through life without suspecting their existence; but apply the requisite stimulus, and at a touch they are there in all their completeness, definite types of mentality which probably somewhere have their field of application and adaptation. No account of the universe in its totality can be final which leaves these other forms of consciousness quite discarded. How to regard them is the question,--for they are so discontinuous with ordinary consciousness.

William James

Varieties of Religious Experience

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Weekly Internet Field Trip: www.key-z.com (a site for soar eyes)

Reading: *Storming Heaven*, pages 185-235

Field trip: to Normal Road site of 60's historical artifact.

In-class video: 1/3 *Berkeley in the 60s*

Nov. 22

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The rejection of any source of evidence is always treason to that ultimate rationalism which urges forward science and

philosophy alike.

Alfred North Whitehead

Recreational Internet Field Trip: Bear's website. www.thebear.org/

Reading: *Storming Heaven*, pages 236-288

Nov. 24 no class, but there is an assignment

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I should say also that I consider Humanistic, Third force Psychology to be transitional, a preparation of a still "higher" Fourth Psychology, transpersonal, transhuman, centered in the cosmos rather than in human needs and interest, going beyond humanness, identity, self-actualization and the like.

Abraham Maslow

Preface to *Toward a Psychology of Being*, 2nd edition

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Reading: *Storming Heaven*, pages 289-320

Weekly Internet Field Trip: www.cognitiveliberty.org

Nov. 29

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Deep reverence for life and ecological awareness are among the most frequent consequences of the psychospiritual transformation that accompanies responsible work with non-ordinary states of consciousness. The same has been true for spiritual emergence of a mystical nature that is based on personal experience. It is my belief that a movement in the direction of fuller awareness of our unconscious minds will vastly increase our chances of planetary survival.

Grof, p. 221, *The Holotropic Mind*.

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Weekly Internet Field Trip: www.ibogaine.org

Reading: *Storming Heaven*, pages 321-374.

Dec. 1

Test. *Storming Heaven* and 60s test and wrap-up discussion

Week of Dec. 6

Turn in Portfolios

You will submit a portfolio that will include your current research report, evaluation of your class discussion, leadership, BPM analysis, book review, your own presentation handouts, your self-selected or term project, and anything else that portrays your work this semester. In place of a final, you will turn in your portfolio during a brief, scheduled meeting with me during this week.

Also include a statement that accurately describes the grade you think you deserve and why that is an appropriate grade. Consider how much work you have done, its quality, thoroughness of your preparation, class participation, and anything else that evaluates your work in this course. However, do not compare your work to others in this class

Book Project Content

Bibliographic information

Author, Year published. Title and subtitle. Edition
Place published. Publisher
Anything special? One of a series? Award winner?
Index? Illustrations? References? Appendices?

What the book is about and the author's purpose

Hint: Prefaces, forewords, and introductions are helpful here.
Author's credentials and background
Author's approach to the book's topic, overall position or slant.

Intended readership(s). Does the author write to a specific readership(s)?

Complexity of thought
Reading difficulty
Specialized vocabulary

THE MEAT OF A REVIEW

The author's main point(s) and your

| | |
|------------|----------------------|
| Evaluation | Give the reasons why |
| Reflection | you make these |
| Judgments | assessments |

Is relevant information omitted from the book? Errors? Does it consider other perspectives fairly?

Does the book's physical appearance add to the book, especially art books and books whose illustrations are a significant aspect of the book? Irrelevant for many books.

What do other reviewers say? In order to form your own judgments, I suggest reading other reviews after you've read the book and formulated your own judgments.

Is the intended readership well served? Who would and who would not benefit from reading the book?

Implications for what we are studying in this course