Drugs & the Internet

Central questions

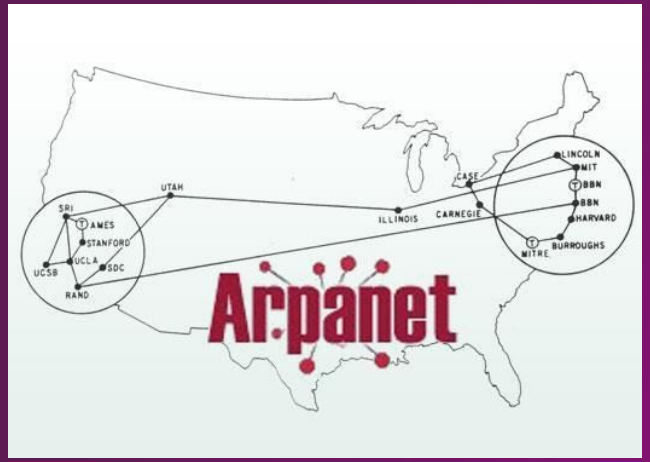
- How has the psychedelic counterculture of the 60s informed the rise of personal computing?
- In what ways was early cyberspace a technological realization of the idea of a commune?
- How has the internet, in turn, shaped the remnants of the psychedelic movement of today?

We do not encourage the use of drugs. Nothing in this presentation is to be interpreted as incitement to the use of drugs (legal or illegal), nor as a claim that they have certain medical/psychological benefits.

Computers over Time

“Throughout the 1960s, computers loomed as technologies of dehumanization, of centralized bureaucracy and the rationalization of social life, and, ultimately, of the Vietnam War. Yet, in the 1990s, the same machines that had served as the defining devices of cold war technocracy emerged as the symbols of its transformation.”

The 1960's

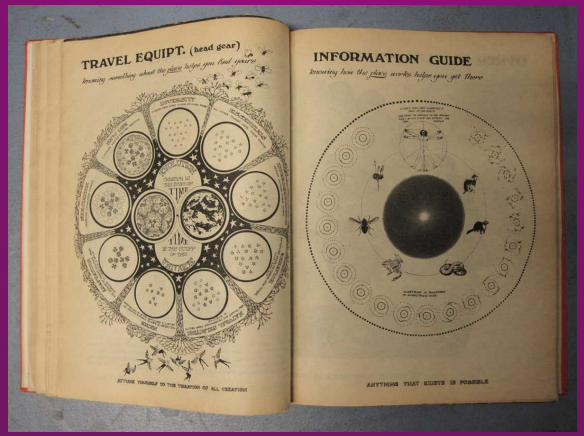


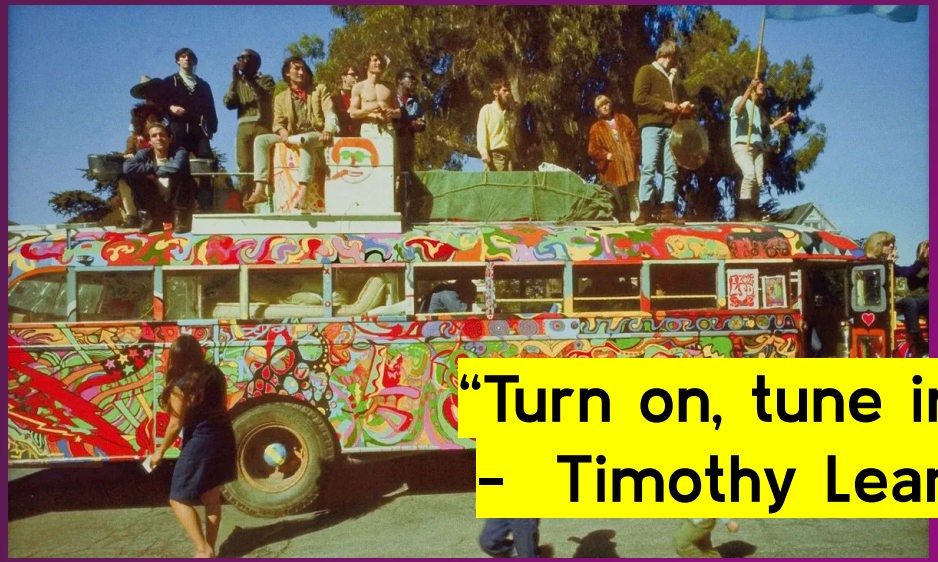
"Most of our generation scorned computers as the embodiment of centralized control"

*“**How mass use of computers might go is not even slightly known as yet**, except for obvious applications in the schools. One informative place to inquire is among the hackers, particularly at night when they're pursuing their own interests... Far beyond borrowing someone else's computer is having your own computer.”*

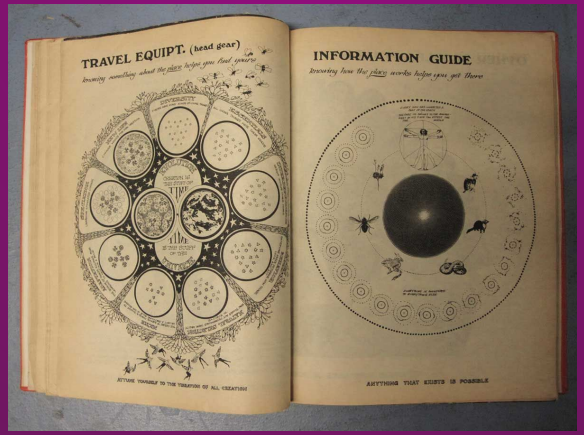
- Stewart Brand, 1972

GRATEFUL DEAD


TRAVEL EQUIPT. (head gear)
INFORMATION GUIDE
ANYTHING THAT EXISTS IS POSSIBLE



"Turn on, tune in, drop out."
– Timothy Leary, 1966



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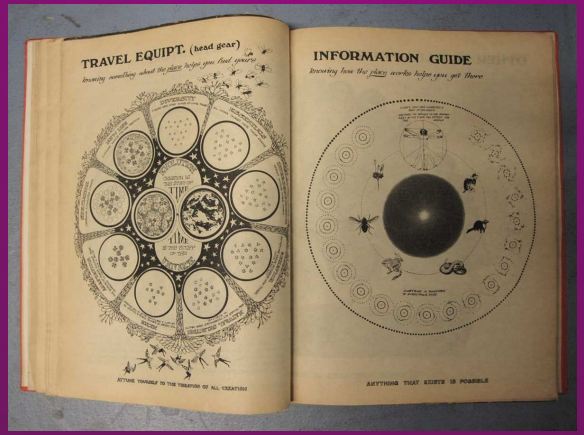
GRATEFUL DEAD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INFORMATION GUIDE
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“hundreds of computer technicians are effectively out of their bodies, locked in life-or-death space combat computer-projected onto cathode ray tube display screens”

“[computers are] outlaw country, where rules are not decree or routine so much as the starker demands of what’s possible.”

– Stewart Brand, 1972

“How mass use of computers might go is not even slightly known as yet, except for obvious applications in the schools. ***One informative place to inquire is among the hackers****, particularly at night when they're pursuing their own interests...* ***Far beyond borrowing someone else's computer is having your own computer.”***

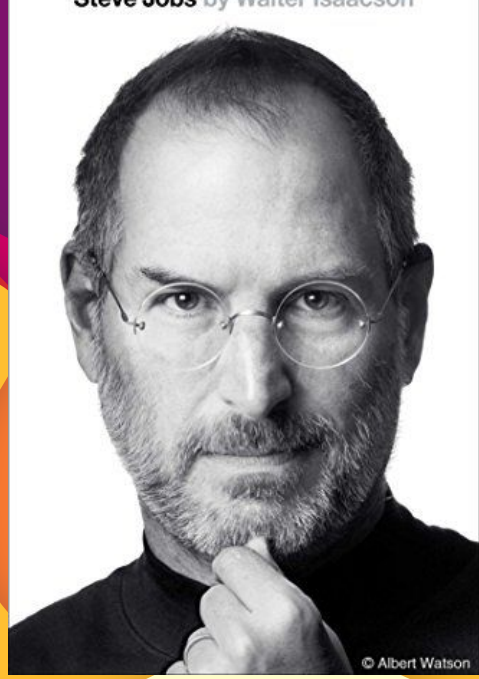
- Stewart Brand, 1972

^The same year someone enters (and exits) Reed College ...

Steve

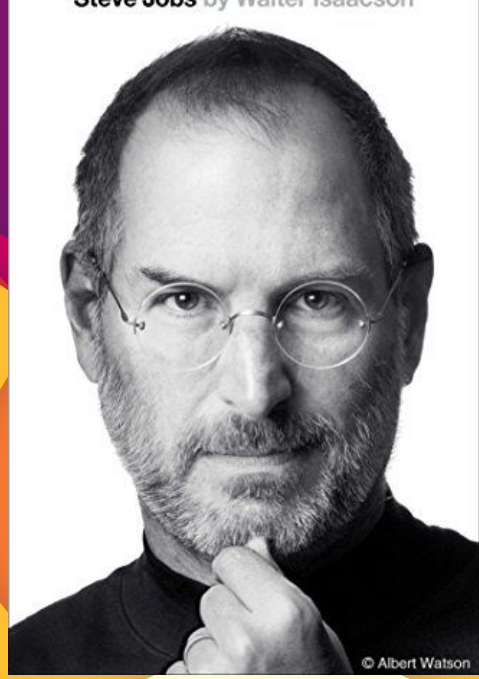
"I came of age at a magical time,. Our consciousness was raised by Zen, and also by LSD … Taking LSD was a profound experience, one of the most important things in my life. LSD shows you that there's another side to the coin, and you can't remember it when it wears off, but you know it. It reinforced my sense of what was important—creating great things instead of making money, putting things back into the stream of history and of human consciousness as much as I could."

"The idealistic wind of the '60s …"



Steve

"'You punched cards, put them in a big deck,' he said about the mainframe machines of that time. 'Steve took me over to the garage. He had a circuit board with a chip on it, a DuMont TV set, a Panasonic cassette tape deck and a keyboard. He said, 'This is an Apple computer.' I said, 'You've got to be joking.' I dismissed the whole idea.'"



Here's to the crazy ones. The misfits. The rebels. The troublemakers. The round pegs in the square holes. The ones who see things differently. They're not fond of rules. And they have no respect for the status quo.

1985:
The Whole Earth ‘Lectronic Link

WIRED

JOHHHNN PERRRY BAAARLOW

1971: Starts writing lyrics for the Grateful Dead

"[LSD] is dangerous because it promotes the idea that reality is something to be manipulated rather than accepted... LSD is illegal primarily because it threatens the dominant American culture, the culture of Control."

JOHHHNN PERRRY BAAARLOW and the Electronic Frontier Foundation

Governments of the Industrial World, you weary giants of flesh and steel, I come from Cyberspace, the new home of Mind. On behalf of the future, I ask you of the past to leave us alone. You are not welcome among us.

We are creating a world that all may enter without privilege or prejudice accorded by race, economic power, military force, or station of birth.

We are creating a world where anyone, anywhere may express his or her beliefs, no matter how singular, without fear of being coerced into silence or conformity.

ELECTRONIC FRONTIER FOUNDATION

JOHHHNN PERRRY BAAARLOW and the Electronic Frontier Foundation

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of Mind. On behalf of the future, I ask you
leave us alone. You are not welcom
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or

~~“Turn on, Tune in, Drop out”~~

“Turn on, Boot up, Jack in”
“PC is the LSD of the 1990's”

"If you take a New Communalist view of the Internet, then you may be inclined to think that simply linking our minds by means of communication technology will in turn enable us to leave traditional party – based institutional politics behind. Living in a state of constant communicational intimacy, we will be able to build the kind of communities that we can not yet experience in the material world. These ideas swirled around the Internet when it first went public in the 1990s and I think they are still with us today.

If you take a New Left view of the Internet then the question you need to ask is not, How does it connect individual to individual?, but, How does it connect individuals to institutions? How does the website that I use or blog I create open me to monitoring? How do corporations that are invisible to me on my laptop nevertheless monetize my social interactions?"

– Fred Turner

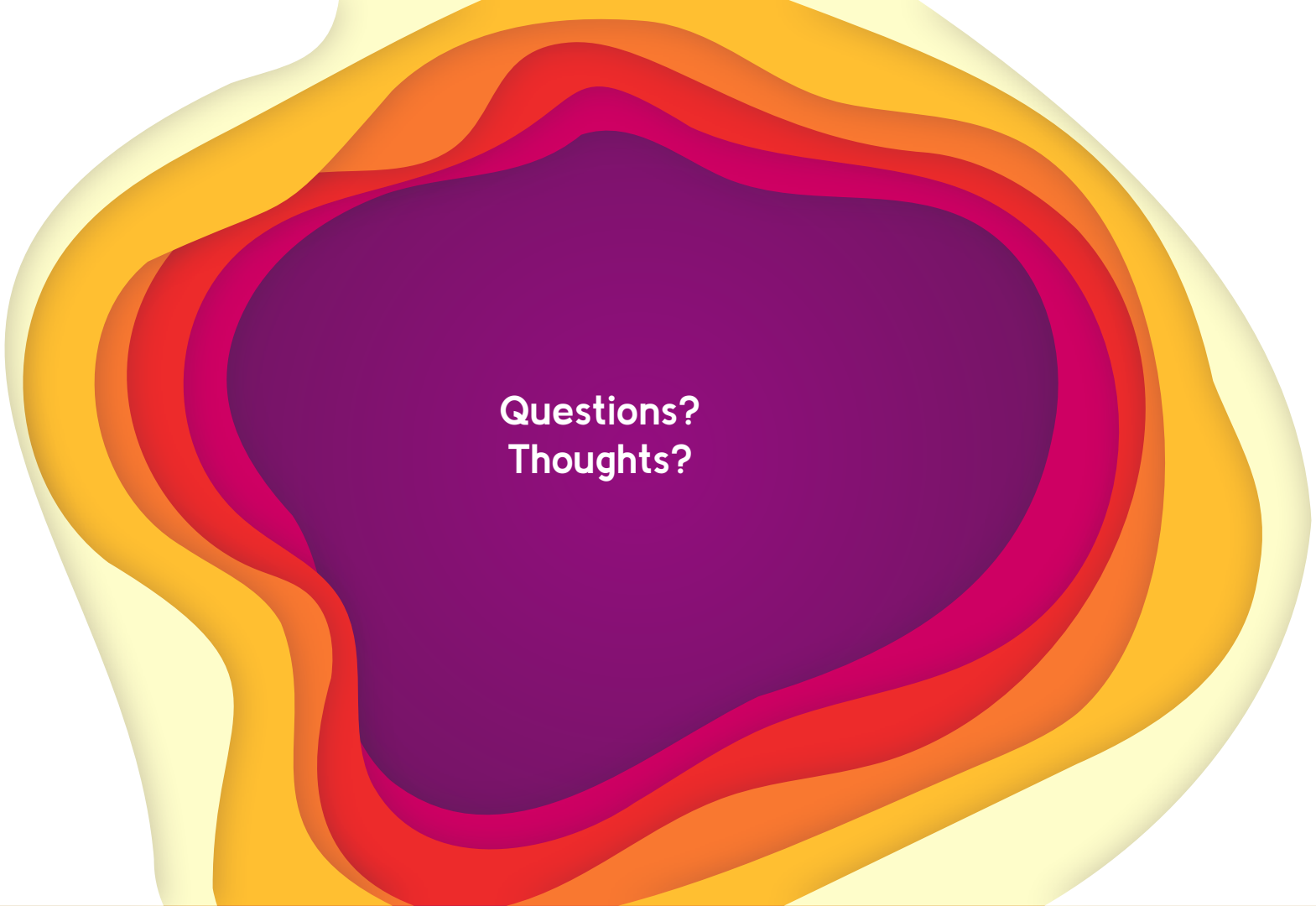
“We used to be kind of rebels, like, if you go back to the origins of Silicon Valley culture, there were these big traditional companies like IBM that seemed to be impenetrable fortresses. And we had to create our own world. To us, we were the underdogs and we had to struggle. And we’ve won. I mean, we have just totally won. We run everything. We’ve disrupted absolutely everything. Politics, finance, education, media, relationships — family relationships, romantic relationships — we’ve absolutely won. But we don’t act like it.

Way back in the ’80s, we wanted everything to be free because we were hippie socialists. But we also loved entrepreneurs because we loved Steve Jobs. So you wanna be both a socialist and a libertarian at the same time, and it’s absurd. And there’s only one way to merge the two things, which is what we call the advertising model, where everything’s free but you pay for it by selling ads.”

– Jaron Lanier

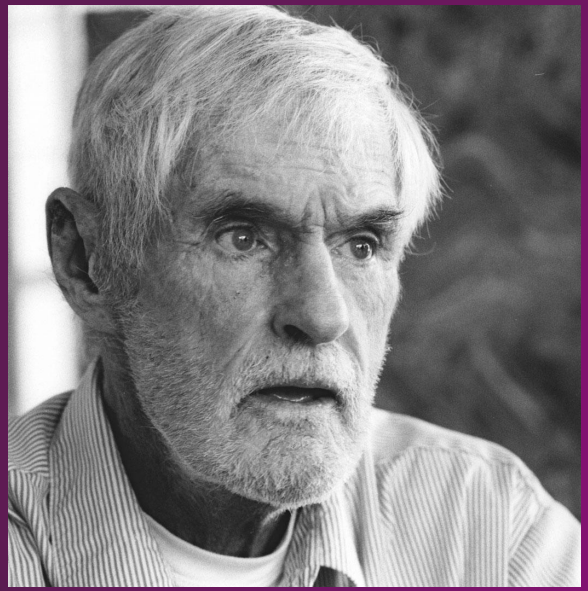
“Hippies like Stewart Brand, Steve Jobs and Kevin Kelly created the idea of the Internet in their own image, he says. It reflects their dream of “living on the edge” and escaping the rules of society. The problem, Turner says, is that the hippie ideal of escaping authority and doing one’s own thing has spawned companies like Google and Facebook that are indifferent to everything around them. Thus, the Google Bus, Facebook’s indifference to its users’ privacy and the general distrust now more and more people have with Silicon Valley”.

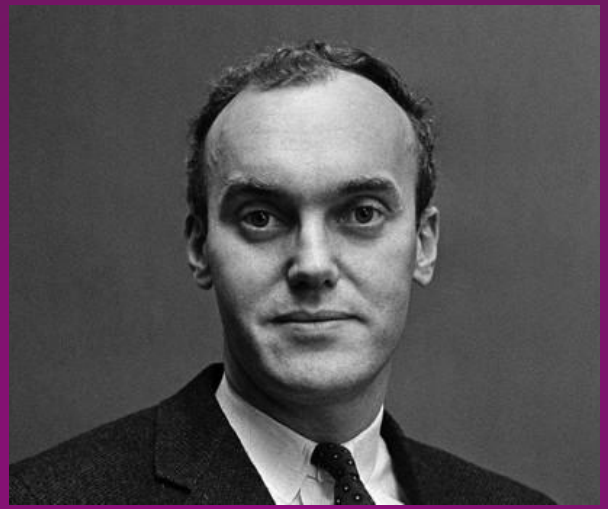
- TechCrunch

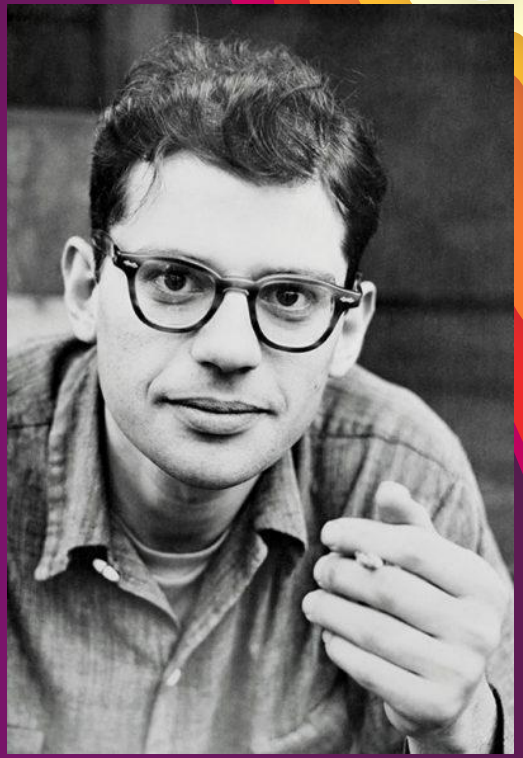

Questions?
Thoughts?

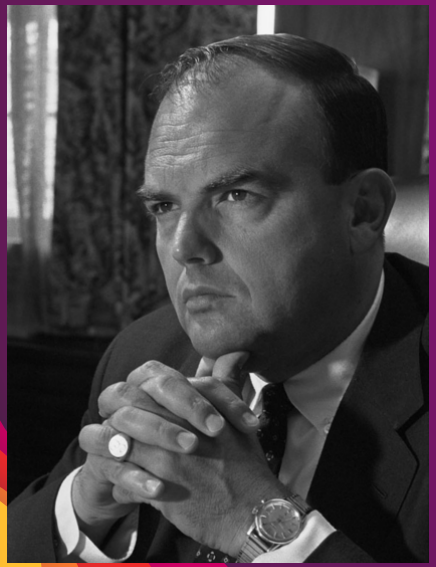
Em. So what happened?

How did psychedelics become so vilified?









“We knew we couldn’t make it illegal to be either against the war or black, but by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and blacks with heroin, and then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities. We could arrest their leaders, raid their homes, break up their meetings, and vilify them night after night on the evening news. Did we know we were lying about the drugs? Of course we did.”

- John Erlrichman

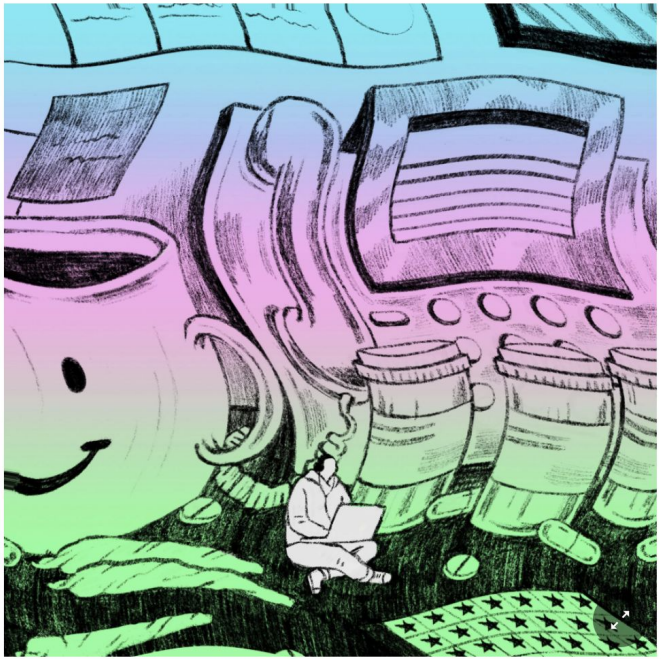
Drugs and the Internet

Psychedelics in Today's Internet

Opinion

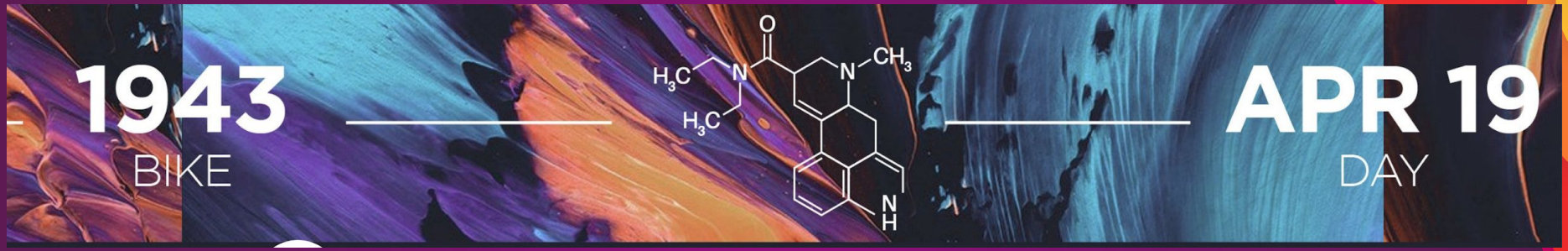
How and Why Silicon Valley Gets High

Everyone's hoping a little LSD can lead them to the next billion-dollar idea.



Claire Merchlinsky

Where did the commune go?



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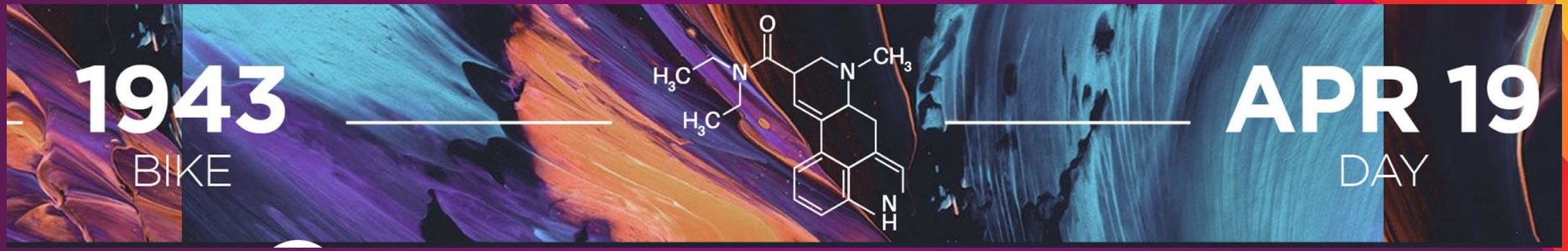
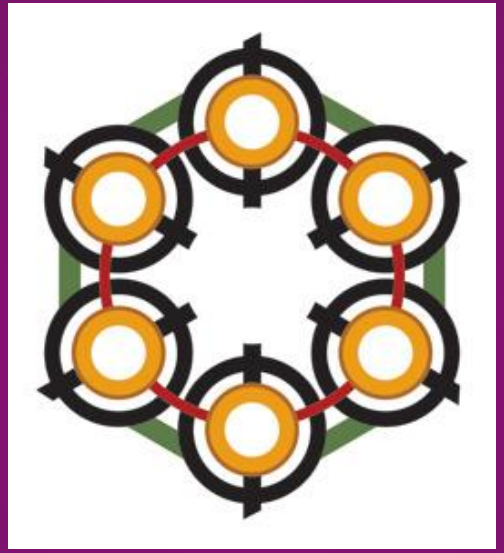


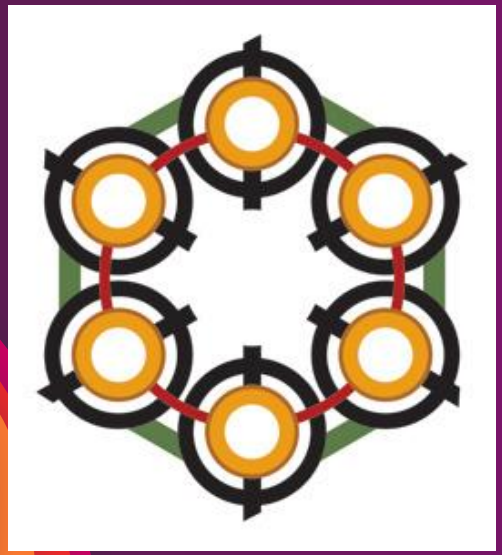
TRIPSIT

"TripSit is the only resource our users have to turn to for advice, support, and positivity. This advice and support can and has saved lives. TripSit provides an answer to these draconian views and attitudes towards drug use. We save lives where they will not."



Persisting Reductions in Cannabis, Opioid, and Stimulant Misuse After Naturalistic Psychedelic Use: An Online Survey.

Garcia-Romeu A, Davis AK, **Erowid E**, **Erowid F**, Griffiths RR, Johnson MW.



So where are we headed?

So where are we headed?

“
Thank you all!