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Use News

A Harm Reduction 'Zine' by
Citizens on Drugs Users' Union

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issue #1,
Summer '95

Welcome to the first issue of Use News a 'zine for & by drug users. Our goal is to enable users to share info with each other on issues important to us, provide health info, encourage safer use, share experiences, and build community.

Use News is looking for your thoughts, letters, poems, drawings, graphics, news clippings, ideas, stories, best and worst trips, warnings about bad drugs, stories about good drugs, or anything else that relates to the drug using culture.

Submissions sent in may be edited for space. Homophobic, racist, sexist or any other nasty shit will not be printed. Just send us your stuff and we'll print it. First names, nick names or street names will do.

No return address is necessary, unless you want your material back or you would like us to send a copy of Use News to you.

send stuff to:
C.O.D./Use News
c/o West Central
Community Health Centres
64 Augusta Ave.
Toronto, ON. Canada
M5T 2L1
ph: (416) 504-6131
fax: (416) 703-7832

This issue of Use News is dedicated to the memory of our friends, including Linda, Ruth, and Mike.

Cover art by Linda Cotnam.

Use News is Anti-Copyright. Please send us a copy of anything produced with material from this 'zine. Thank.

New Users' Union Formed in Toronto

Citizens On Drugs (C.O.D.), a users' union, was formed in Toronto on February 1, 1995. C.O.D. is a union of people with personal experience with drug use – sort of like an "AIDS Action Now!" or "ACT UP!" for drug users. We chose to use the word "citizen" in our name because we want to emphasize that we are part of society. C.O.D. provides a users' response to the "war on drugs," and promotes a harm reduction model.

Thousands of people are being arrested and thrown in jails because they use drugs. Users' unions can help to politicize drug users and enable us to feel that we can stand up for some basic civil rights – to say that we are a part of society and we use drugs – we are not pariahs or demons. While some people may have concerns about groups that empower drug users, it is this type of empowerment that can bring about safer drug use, a reduction in use, or even quitting.

Some members of C.O.D. were at the 5th International Conference on the Reduction of Drug-Related Harm in Toronto in March, '94. While there we had the pleasure of meeting members of the International Drug Users' Network (IDUN), and participated in forming a North American chapter called the North American Users' Network (NAUN). IDUN is a communications network working toward increasing recognition of drug users' basic human rights and the effects of drug laws and policies on our lives.

There are a number of people/groups/coalitions doing work around harm reduction and drug policy in Toronto, but by far the majority of them are organized by social service or health professionals, lawyers, policy makers, etc. It is essential that users have a voice in these discussions. Some members of C.O.D. are working in the AIDS/social service realm, and will continue to participate in these various coalitions.

We decided to get things started by putting out a users' newsletter to promote awareness of C.O.D. and issues of concern. We are also collecting information and contacts for other users' unions and projects. Please send us anything you think we may find interesting or helpful.

Users' groups advocate for changes in policies and alternatives to existing drug laws. We also address social and health-related issues for drug users. These include poverty, nutrition, health (Hepatitis B & C, HIV/AIDS), drug testing, treatment programs, alternative treatments (i.e., acupuncture, herbs), discrimination, and safer use. In order to use drugs safely, we need accurate information about various drugs and their effects. By looking after ourselves and each other we can help to change the poor self-image that many drug users have. And by educating the public we can begin to legitimize the drug-using culture.

C.O.D. meetings are on the first and third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm at the Niagara Neighbourhood Health Centre (674 Queen St. W.).

- Kenn Quayle



**Citizens
On
Drugs**

A Users' Union

Meets at 7:00 pm on the 1st & 3rd Wed. of each month
at the Niagara Neighbourhood Health Centre
674 Queen St. W.
info: (416) 504-6131

(If you can't make it, call us with your support or suggestions)

STOP THE NEW DRUG LAW, BILL C-7



Bill C-7: Canada's New, Old Drug Law

Since the Liberal Party came into power a couple years back, the government has brought forward a new bill (a proposed law) called Bill C-7 that would change the current drug laws in Canada. This bill combines the Food and Drugs Act and the Narcotic Control Act, the two laws that already control drugs in the country, and add some new rules for enforcement. It is roughly the same as what the last Conservative government tried to pass before they were turfed out - a bill that the Liberals opposed at the time.

These new changes will effect many peoples' lives in very dramatic ways. The new drug enforcement efforts in this country will be more like in the U.S.A., opening the door for more citizens to do time in jails for possession of drugs. Here are some of the major changes this bill suggests, moving the Canadian police and courts closer to an American-style drug war.

1/ Various drugs and drug components will be listed under a schedule. These lists will divide drugs into categories by their danger to society (not the user). This means that heroin, coke, and pot all show up on the same list (list #1), because they are the most common drugs. Other drugs are listed under different schedules and prosecution by the courts is related to what list your drug of choice is on.

2/ Control of the importing or exporting of chemicals or ingredients used to make designer drugs like ecstasy, speed, etc. This includes products that are not used as drugs on their own.

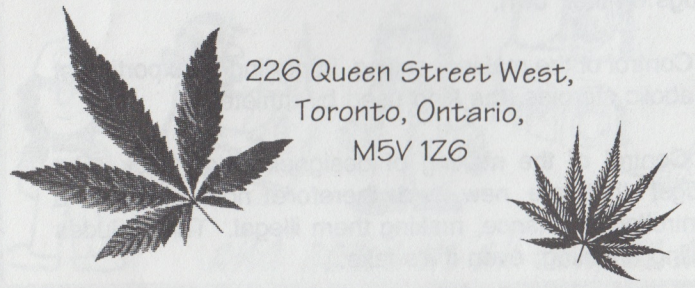
3/ Control of the making, selling, importing or exporting of anabolic steroids, the kind used by athletes.

4/ Control of the making of designer drugs (look alike drugs) that are new and therefore not listed as a controlled substance, making them illegal. This includes selling anything, even if it's fake.



By shopping at the Friendly Stranger, you are supporting direct action towards the decriminalization of cannabis sativa for paper, fabric, fuel, food, and medicine.

226 Queen Street West,
Toronto, Ontario,
M5V 1Z6



- 5/ New rules for the search and seizure of property thought to be used for drug dealing or bought with drug money, giving the police more power to take homes, property, cars, cell phones, etc.
- 6/ Other changes will include increases in fines and jail sentences for possession, selling, import or export of drugs. This also includes the containers drugs are bought or used in, like baggies, pipes, needles, etc. This is of great concern to needle exchange programs.

The main purpose for this new law is that it will give the police and the courts more power to arrest and convict people who use drugs, thus supposedly stopping the use of drugs in society.

In reality this law will have the opposite effect. It does nothing for those who want help with their drug use. It will not stop drug-related violence, and will more likely increase it by further pushing drug use underground. It will increase the powers of the cops to search innocent people and fill jails with people who are not criminals. It will not protect people from drugs of unknown potency or content. It does not take into account the fact that tobacco and alcohol, both legal drugs, do more harm to people every year than illicit drug use does in this country. It does nothing to address the issues of poverty, unemployment, or homelessness for the people that this law will largely effect. People on the streets will become easy targets for harassment. It will drain funds and resources from other programs that can address these issues, including much needed treatment options in this country. Most of all this law shows that we have learned nothing from the failure of prohibition during the 1920's (a period of time when alcohol was not allowed and people had to sneak around and hide their drinking) or the failure of the current war on drugs in the U.S.A.

ARE YOU TIRED
OF BEING
TREATED LIKE
YOU DON'T COUNT ?

DON'T BELIEVE IT!!

It's time for drug users to get organized and take care of our own. If we don't do it, WHO WILL?



Refusal of painkillers or medical services

HAS THIS EVER HAPPENED TO YOU?

Threats to take your children away

Police Harassment

Bill C-7 is well under way to becoming law, but is not there yet. The government is considering amendments which would mostly be changes in wording. They are hoping to get the Bill to its third reading and pass it into law before summer recess, but it is likely that it won't be dealt with until the Fall. Many members of the Liberal Party and other parties are not happy with the bill as it is. Some have gone as far as to say that it's too harsh and that we should be going in a totally different direction.

But if Bill C-7 passes, being a drug user in this country will make you more of a criminal than it ever has before.

- Tim Potts

Right now you can write to your Member of Parliament. MP's need to know that drug users are voters too and that we are unhappy with the direction Bill C-7 is taking us. To find out the name and phone number for the MP in your area, call Reference Canada toll free from anywhere in Canada at 1-800-667-3355, or from Ontario you can call Elections Canada at 1-800-463-6868.

You can also write to the following people:

Allan Rock
Minister of Justice
Justice Building
239 Wellington Ave.
Ottawa, ON. K1A 0H8
ph: (613) 992-4621
fax: (613) 990-7255

Herb Gray
Solicitor General
Sir Wilfred Laurier Building
340 Laurier Ave. W.
Ottawa, ON. K1A 0P8
ph: (613) 991-2924
fax: (613) 952-2240

Diane Marleau
Minister of Health
Jeanne Mance Building
21st fl., Tunney's Pasture
Ottawa, ON. K1A 0K9
ph: (613) 957-0200
fax: (613) 952-1154

The Drug War Continues!

The "War On Drugs" is a very real war. It involves guns, armies, invasions, social control, loss of human and other rights, murder and casualties. Initiated by members of the Ronald Reagan family and peaking under George Bush, the measures taken by American government, law enforcement, military and mass media have successfully limited the parameters of discussion concerning illegal drug use and the perceived social problems attached to them.

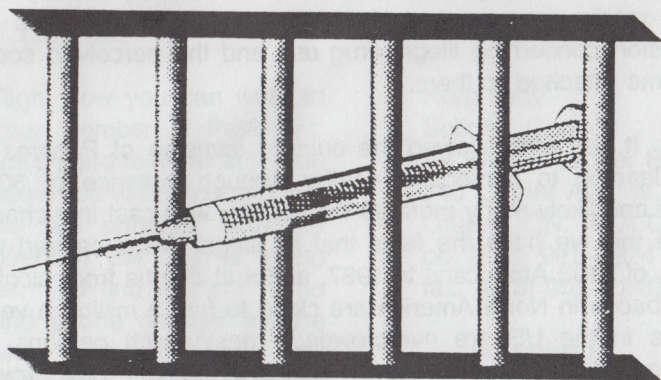
It has also allowed the outright invasion of Panama in 1989 leading to immediate deaths through violence of 3000 people and likely many more as the country was cast into chaos. Beside this we have the facts that all illegal drugs caused the deaths of 3403 Americans in 1987, and that deaths from alcohol and tobacco in North America are close to half a million a year. Prisons in the US are overcrowded, mostly with persons on cocaine-related charges, and are one of America's "new growth industries" because their system allows for the privatization of correction facilities. The American economy is a war-based economy.

Like many of America's more recent wars, the War On Drugs does not reflect popular opinion. Only 11% of the American public in 1991 even cited drugs as a prime concern. This, however, is having no reflection on legislation. The US recently reformed its capital punishment law and changed the number of possible capital offenses from 2 to over 50. Some of these are drug-related offenses. One of the most absurd changes to their drug laws is the classification of marijuana in the same category as heroin or "schedule 1" drugs. All of America's satellites, and especially Canada, are falling into line with US legislative reforms.

All of this in the shadow of cuts to our social programs. The crowding and costs of Canadian correctional facilities would be as astounding as the legal expenses, all of which will drain public money, as a prison cannot be run for profit in Canada (yet?).

Misinformation and hysteria concerning the War On Drugs has silenced the public on this issue and has led the users of illegal drugs to a greater role of outcast and despair when they are your friend, neighbour, boss, employee, co-worker, or whoever. The War On Drugs, like many elements of American foreign policy, stands on a platform of empty moralizing, not on the reduction of harm to the public and especially the users.

- Jordan Trudel



Demystifying Drugs: Social Issues

In the western world we are currently several years into "The war on drugs" as proclaimed by the United States federal government under Ronald and Nancy Reagan. Though the average non-user scarcely thinks of the war on drugs (W.O.D.) as a war, it is an everyday source of anxiety and immobilization for illegal drug users living in the shadow of media hysteria and legislative reforms aimed at removing civil rights from harmless citizens. Slogans such as "Zero Tolerance" and "Just Say No" illustrate the depth of thought which has characterized the establishment's approach to drug use.

However, it is becoming increasingly obvious to many people who circulate in user communities that the W.O.D. is serving some mysterious function other than to improve the quality of life for everyone. Drug users are called criminals, pushed to the margins of society, and left open to hate. Meanwhile, a study published in Now Magazine last year confirms that chronic illegal drug users are generally as capable as non-users when working and socializing. And, to be **general**, one must consider the widespread consumption of alcohol and tobacco among "role model" professional and super-rich classes. With great subtlety, drug war propaganda has thrown the emotions of mainstream culture behind the following non-fact: drugs are nothing but dangerous, and drug users are in violation of normality. The mind boggles that our society has sanctioned alcohol -- socially violent and biologically unhealthy -- while vilifying the less harmful marijuana plant.

To deal with the social position of the drug user is to deal with the efforts that have been made to control the public's opinion of illegal drug use. The W.O.D. is the fruit of a very effective recurring media spasm which invites the public to hate and fear something under its nose, for the sake of profitable mass action.

THE INTERNATIONAL WAR

Internationally, the W.O.D. is not aimed at reducing or eliminating drug use. Instead, it has been used as a disguise for American invasions in Latin America and elsewhere. Countries like Panama and Bolivia, to name a few good examples, have populations which have been systematically compelled to grow drug crops in order to survive. With large numbers of drug manufacturers in a corrupt society, it makes sense to contrive a drug war as an excuse to allow military forces to arrest or shoot common people. There have been countless documented attacks against community activists and radical thinkers, many of whom have no relation to the drug trade. Additionally, the trade of illegal drugs has provided the necessary "invisible revenue" used for terrorist operations run from Washington.

With regard to the domestic war on drugs, the foremost concerns are said to be crime prevention, morality, and health. Such rhetoric sounds nice (who can disagree with these goals?), even if oversimplification has murdered logic. The requirement is an appraisal of the W.O.D. in the context of modern capitalistic propaganda.

CRIME

Since prohibition began earlier this century, we have heard more and more of "drug-related crime". While communism has ceased to be a viable excuse for America's number one industry (the military), the W.O.D. has increased both revenue and power for police. As a consequence, the drug war of today makes yesterday's fight against alcohol prohibition look like bows-and-arrows. There is no denying the fact that the W.O.D. has caused tremendous violence, but we can safely speculate that much "drug-related crime" could be stopped by ending prohibition. Any discussion of this alternative remains largely unheard because the media love crime, and crime scares people, and scared people are assets to the W.O.D. Nevertheless, the criminalization of drugs is up for debate.

A major obstacle to overcoming the W.O.D. is its longevity. The longer it takes to declare drugs as a fact of life, the more entrenched the impetus for war becomes. For example, in Mexico authorities have been forced to adopt America's drug war agenda, which places police in confrontation with established marijuana producers, who naturally defend their lucrative industry. In a country where drugs come with the land and are widely accepted commodities, the W.O.D. has been somewhat laughable until the past several years during which Mexican police have been watching their colleagues die in the fighting. Hence, the motivation to crush the drug culture manifests in the minds of soldiers who were originally asked to fight arbitrarily. We must consider this snowball effect in North America too. By now, authorities here have assumed their own internal justification for the W.O.D. Any attempt to reverse drug policy should acknowledge the victims on both sides of the struggle, especially given how unnecessary the losses were.

MORALITY

Perhaps if morality is defined as a code by which we judge someone's humanity, we can then define human nature as the prime judge of morality itself. That is to say, morals and the civilization they produce cannot war against human nature. If they appear to, they are not morals, but values implanted by propaganda.

In this scientific age of secular values, morality is often confused with the law. With regard to illegal drugs, the application of the law is the immoral problem facing the community, not the drug use. Drugs are common substances found around the planet, many are addictive, several are associated with mind-expansion, yet the W.O.D. assumes victory is possible with enough guns and "education". Clearly, drug laws lack a connection to basic reality, therefore the public must be sold on the W.O.D. for sentimental reasons. So illegal drugs are immoral in law, in popular journalism, and eventually, in the "public opinion".

A very real reason for the deployment of morality against drugs is the constant drive of capitalist society to increase productivity. Whether or not illegal drugs represent a threat to productivity (as in laziness), they can help reinforce a sagging work ethic if they are removed as a source of refuge for the disgruntled working class. Then the McJob worker is guided to alcohol and tobacco, both addictive enough to be good business in any economy without stirring the population. Though alcohol may render its drinker useless for work, drinking is not perceived by employers as a sign of robbed productivity. Strangely, illegal drugs can be very productive if the private sector operates jails (as in the U.S.) in conjunction with the persecution of manufacturers, traffickers, and users. Despite Canada having state-owned jails, one should not dismiss the utility of drug busting as a means to suppress individuals and groups (i.e. the poor, radicals, anarchists, hobbyists...) From the point of view of authorities, this is indeed productive.

Roll it on... Roll on

Plenty of lube. e.g.
Wetstuff
Muco
Ky
Lubatax
Superlube

Hold base when you pull out.

Remove air

Water-based lube only

Roll smoothly on the way down

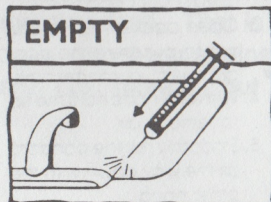
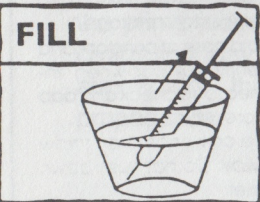
1. Practice by yourself. Become familiar and confident.
2. Tell your partner that you always use condoms.
3. Open packet. Be careful not to puncture the condom with your finger nails.
4. With one hand hold the tip to remove air.
5. Smoothly roll the condom all the way down with the other hand.
6. After you put the condom on add plenty of water based lube. (A drop of lube inside the condom helps make it feel better and also helps stop breakage.)
7. Hold base of condom and gently pull out when finished, or to check and add more lube.
8. Use only once then throw away. Do not flush down toilet.

HEALTH

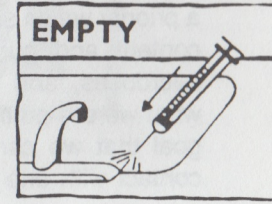
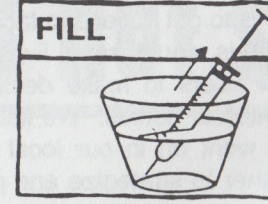
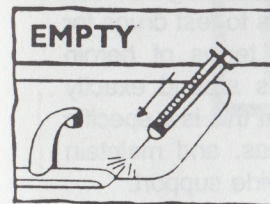
Perhaps the most dramatic interplay between drug war enforcers and drug war resisters is the fight to redefine civil liberties as "Do what thou wilt and hurt no-one." Obviously, the act of ingesting drugs affects only the user, and does not, strictly-speaking, hurt anyone else. Admittedly, drugs are unhealthy in the sense they may be carcinogenic, liver-rotting, or brain-damaging, however, the potential health benefits range from relief of boredom, stress, and depression to increased creativity, receptivity, self-awareness, and energy. In light of these trade-offs, it is clear that drug users are not typically aspiring to self-destruct, contrary to the image perpetuated by the W.O.D. Since our earliest history as a race, we have felt the desire to alter our states of perception and this must not be ignored; drug use is a right or a privilege or a necessity but it is here to stay. For a drug user to eliminate guilt, he or she must realize the decision to take drugs is personal, not public. One of the best ways to deflect drug war propaganda is to deliberately flaunt as much of the drug culture as possible, i.e. psychedelic aesthetics and peaceful politics. In this way, anyone who takes it upon themselves to investigate drugs is surrounded by visible signs of other users in society, and his or her self-esteem is encouraged.

Unfortunately, drugs for escapism can cause problems in a society which offers much to retreat from. In a loop without justice, we see some people in trouble with persecution, poverty, hatred, violence, depression, etc. who seek escapism, use drugs, and are branded criminals, heavily fined or sent to prison-- all of which detracts from the original crisis behind the need for escapism. The W.O.D. may be attempting to eliminate specific drugs, but we are living in a society which nurtures drug use itself on a level more primal and blunt than the "Just Say No" campaign against it.

1. Rinse 2 times in cold water & leave fit full of water for 30 secs each time
2. Rinse 2 times leave fit full of bleach



3. Rinse 2 times in bleach & for 30 secs each time



Socially, a drug user is perceived as less physically healthy than an average non-user. The truth of the matter is hard to determine since most people who abstain from illegal drugs are fairly regular consumers of alcohol, cigarettes, caffeine, prescription drugs, aspartame, agrichemicals, hormones, preservatives, chlorine, fluoride, and carbon monoxide, so who is living the clean life? The two most complete studies on cannabis (Jamaican studies 1968-74, and the Costa Rican study 1980) indicate that everything else being equal, an average cannabis smoker will live longer than a person that does no drugs at all; with less wrinkles and generally less stress, thereby having fewer illnesses. LSD and similar drugs have had inconclusive consequences following controlled use. Cocaine and heroin, while dangerous with regular use, are not considered "killers" if taken sparingly in one's lifetime. In any case, drug users must see their health like everyone else's: as a matter of personal choice, with routine maintenance of acceptable losses. Incidentally, the W.O.D. seeks to isolate drug users from drug information (like potency testing), with lethal consequences. Hardly an advance in protecting the public health.

The contemporary strategy favoured by radical health workers, lawyers, and decriminalization activists is to foster harm reduction. This means taking an unbiased view of the drugs that exist and adapting to reduce or eliminate the harm to users and the public. Harm reduction is not a solution to all of the problems that spring from drugs, but if implemented in the name of public safety, the stability of the drug culture could improve to the point where there is a unified strike against the W.O.D. To aid in this metamorphosis, drug users can party together with a greater purpose in mind: the freedom to be hedonistic without fear of harm.

- Adam Foord

Drugs, Sex & Harm Reduction

On June 9 & 10, '95 there was a conference in New York City called "Drugs, Sex and Harm Reduction." Several people from Toronto were there, including some members of C.O.D. It was wonderful to be in an environment where there were so many others who believe and are working on harm reduction in their areas. For some of us it was also a chance to meet up with friends from previous conferences.

Throughout the conference there were emotional exchanges when abstentionists and 12-steppers expressed their concerns that harm reduction excluded them. Harm reductionists tried to reassure them that this is not the case. If abstention works for you, then go for it - not using drugs is clearly harm reduction. But for most drug users (we heard statistics of around 90%), it is neither desirable or realistic to stop using. Instead, we can focus on reducing use, or reducing harm. This can include changing the way you use your drugs (i.e., smoking heroin instead of injecting), or changing the drugs you use (like smoking pot instead of crack). In general, I thought that it was good that people were expressing themselves, and it was mostly done in the spirit of open communication.

We also had the opportunity to meet a number of users from New York, Philadelphia, Atlanta, San Francisco, Santa Cruz, and Los Angeles. Like Toronto, some of these cities have users' unions which have formed quite recently. Others have been going a bit longer. At St. Ann's Corner of Harm Reduction (SACHR) in the South Bronx, they produce a newsletter called "Street Corner News." Both the Philadelphia and Santa Cruz needle exchange projects have produced fliers about what to do if someone overdoses, and the Philadelphia project has also produced a pamphlet for safer crack smoking.

At a users' workshop at the conference, we agreed that a priority we all share is to get access to facilities to test drugs for content and purity. This could save lives in terms of heroin overdoses, and allow users to make decisions around exactly what we are putting into our bodies. We felt that this is a specific goal that we can all work on in our local areas, and maintain contact with one another to strategize and provide support.

The International Coalition for Addicts' Resources & Enlightenment (ICARE) in New York volunteered to coordinate networking among users' groups. They can be reached at 39 Ave. C, N.Y., N.Y., 10009, USA, phone: (212) 228-7734, fax: 477-7015. On the Internet, you can contact the Drug Reform Coordination Network at drcnet@net.com.com or the AIDS Prevention Action Network at Joey4rigs@aol.com

The First National (USA) Harm Reduction Conference is being planned for Sept. '96 in San Francisco. For more info, contact the Harm Reduction Coalition, P.O. Box 77248, San Francisco, CA., 94107, USA, phone: (415) 621-1451, fax: 621-1184.

- Kenn Quayle

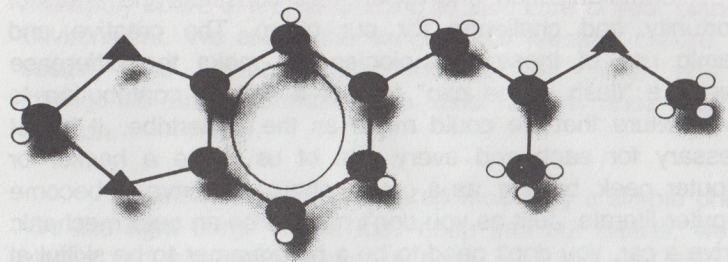


Cybertribe Rising

We ravers, as a new breed of individuals, have a unique chance to make a difference in the world we live in. Most of you, for better or worse, who are reading this, reside in the United States or some other industrialized nation. You probably came across this at a rave or house party. Some of you have had profound experiences of togetherness and sense of community while attending events such as this. What we need to do as a group is expand this feeling into our lives and into the global community. As a group, we are incredibly diverse. We are multi-racial, multi-ethnic and multi-talented. We are artists, and engineers, dancers and bankers, doctors and lawyers, scientists and mystics. In many respects, we are the results of the goals of the 60's. We have learned to inter-relate, communicate, and party with each other across lines of race, gender, class and sexual preference. We all have come together under one "house" to share a few moments in eternity before we go back to our jobs in the real world. Consider what the real world would be like if part of our jobs were to spread that sense of unity and togetherness that we experience within the rave "family" to others that we come in contact with. We who live in the industrialized nations have access to incredible technologies. These technologies, like all forms of power, can be used to harm or heal. The choice is left up to you and me to decide, right now, how our current and emerging energies, wealth and technologies will be used.

When we come together for a ritual such as a full moon rave on a remote beach, we are creating what author Hakim Bey calls a Temporary Autonomous Zone (TAZ). A rave creates a TAZ of relatively short duration, only a few hours, but during that time we function on a level of community. In the area that has been appropriated, a separate code of ethics and behaviour can be enacted. The authorities are troubled when it becomes apparent that sections of society don't want or need their policing activities. It is not part of their model society to have a gathering of several hundred people from diverse backgrounds and classes without the eruption of violence and exploitation. The authorities are frightened because they are not needed; which means they no longer are in control. Think about the ramifications.

The strength of a TAZ formed by rave activity is not measured in how many people possess weapons or how well they can outsmart or outflank the police, but in how well the group can function as a community, reach a consensus during a crisis, and cooperate to ensure the safety of each and every member of the group. When we are raving, it is important to remember that if we



The chemical structure of Ecstasy, also known as MDMA

don't want to have the authorities at our events, then we, each and every one of us, have to be the authorities. This does not mean that we should have "rave police forces", the old, dominator way of thinking. What needs to happen is that we have to be just a little more aware of what goes on around us, and learn to take care of people in our immediate "family" as well as looking out for others outside of our immediate circle of friends. If we want to have parties in remote or underground locations, we need to be able to handle minor emergencies like administering first-aid, CPR and being able to "talk down" someone. This is what building community is all about.

Consensus and cooperation go hand in hand with community. Consensus means collective opinion or general agreement, it doesn't mean that you have to have the same beliefs as your group. What it means is that you are willing to support the general direction that the community is going in or, if you feel strongly about something, that you take responsibility for getting your point across. With communities that work by consensus, the whole group cannot move forward unless everyone agrees or at least agrees to allow movement (i.e., steps out of the way). This is not the same as attempting to change an agreed upon decision once it has been decided, but it can include forming a contingency plan if you feel that the decision is doomed to failure. The former is sabotage, the latter is supportive. The majority opinion of the group also has a duty not to "bull-doze" their opinion over the minority. Remember, one person who holds their ground should be enough to stop whatever the majority decision might be. That is the essence of consensus. Cooperation ensures that individuals or the sub-groups don't abuse their powers of veto or opinion. This is not an easy thing to achieve in practice and is the major place that consenting governments breakdown.

Communication and cybernetics constitute the areas of opportunity and challenge for our group. The creative and dynamic use of these technologies will make the difference between a "flash in the pan" fad, or a serious contribution to global culture that we could make as the Cybertribe. It is not necessary for each and every one of us to be a hacker or computer geek, but we, as a group, should all strive to become computer literate. Just as you don't need to be an auto mechanic to drive a car, you don't need to be a programmer to be skilful at the use of computers. As the realm of computers and telecommunications continues to merge, computer literacy will become as important as standard literacy is today.

The Cybertribe exists today. All over the world, thousands of ravers communicate daily via e-mail over an international computer network called the Internet. They do everything from exchanging information on the latest techno trax, to planning and organizing raves, to discussing the scene politics and the ultimate meaning of life. E-mail has turned out to be an invaluable tool for keeping in touch with folks in our "family" as well as the worldwide "family". It also is a great aid at building consensus and cooperation. Virtual sites (such as Vrave telnet port) function 24 hours a day and provide a meeting place where ravers from all over the world can meet, share ideas and socialize. When personal communicators (pagers that can send and receive data) come on line in the near future, the Cybertribe will be able to communicate with each other at the speed of light. At no other time in history has a movement had the facilities of high speed communication at their disposal; this is significant, but technology alone is not enough to make a difference. Each and every one of us must strive to become more aware, and more loving. Not because our parents or some other authority wants it, but because it is necessary if we, our movement, and our house (planet) are going to survive in coming years.

Intelligence and intuition are the glue that binds these diverse areas into a functioning, organic whole. Intelligence, as we use it here, is the accumulation of knowledge. On a mundane level, it is knowing the laws, behaviour, policies, and procedures that the authorities will utilize in their dealings with us; for example the techniques the Milwaukee police used to bust 950 people at a rave and the legal strategies the ravers used to combat this type of harassment by the police (400 people pleaded not guilty and the charges were dropped, the Milwaukee raver community is now filing a class action suit against the city for civil rights violations). On a higher level, it is learning about the nature of the environment around you, which includes everything from paying

monopoly board of life) to learning to take care of your planetary environment. We are at the vanguard of Western culture, both socially and technologically, and as we gather and use intelligence and information we must temper their use with intuition.

Intuition can be summed up mostly by a simple phrase: "Do the right thing." If we look deep into our hearts, we can always find that place where we know what the next step is. It may not be the thing our parents or our teachers or our leaders may want or tell us to do, but it is the thing that will always feel right. Sometimes it is hard to tune into this place and find where our intuition speaks to us. Sometimes you have to just be still, but it is always there. When people as a whole are acting with intelligence and intuition, laws become unnecessary because it becomes obvious what does and doesn't work.

It's up to us to pick up the pieces of a post Communist/Capitalist, us/them "dominator culture" world, and transform it into a "partnership culture" world of global unity with respect for cultural diversity. It can be done, but it will take work, most likely all of our lifetime at least. But when all is said and done, we will leave to our children an intact planet which will be back on the road to health and prosperity, rather than a sick, dying world, flitting from crisis to crisis, awaiting the apocalypse. The choice is ours now, as we gather together in our dance rituals to build the feeling of togetherness, instill courage and breakdown emotional and mental barriers.

Remember in the months and years to come as this tapestry that we call the "scene" unfolds...

They may stop the party, but they can't stop the future.

(reprinted from Subterrane 2, who reprinted it from Ammo Magazine, who reprinted it from the Internet. May be freely pirated and quoted - the publishers and authors would like to be informed at: umt@nexsys.net)

TRIP

Toronto
Raver
Info

Project

TRIP

Toronto Raver Info Project

TRIP provides free condoms and safer sex and safer drug use info to the rave community by setting up tables or handing out materials at raves, clubs or places where ravers hang out.

Ravers - Come and TRIP with us. TRIP is looking for volunteers to help with our info tables. Give us a call if you want to help out.

Promoters - Support our TRIP.

Give us a call to make arrangements to have the TRIP table at your event. Help to keep our scene a safe one.

phone: (416) 504-6131

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TRIP is a program of the
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- A Users' Union
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IDU Union - users and ex-users
advocating for methadone.
Temporary contact c/o C.O.D.

The F.U.N. Group
(Finally Understanding Narcotics)
- a wellness and support group
for injection drug users.
Parkdale Community Health Centre
1257 Queen St. W.,
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ph: (416) 537-2455

A.S.A.P. (Addiction Support
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